BLUE BOOK

Magazine of Adventure in Fact and Fiction ★ January, ★ 1952

Men of America: Elisha Kane . . . *Painted by John Fulton*

TWO SHORT NOVELS

THE GREAT GALE *by Mackenzie Cottrell*

PASSPORT TO JEOPARDY *by Philip Clark*

TRAIN TO NOWHERE *by Hamilton Greene*

Nine short stories and many special features

MEN OF AMERICA . . . . ELISHA KANE

Our Arctic Pioneer

DR. ELISHA KENT KANE, U.S.N., lived only thirty-seven years, and accomplished in that short time nothing to change the course of history. Yet his death on a February morning in 1857 touched off one of the greatest displays of public mourning America has allowed itself. Flags throughout the land were lowered to half-mast and crowds everywhere watched silently as the train bearing the Doctor's body rolled slowly north from New Orleans to his home city of Philadelphia. In Louisville and Cincinnati, in Columbus and Baltimore, the streets along the procession's route were jammed, and when the casket finally reached Philadelphia, thousands filed past as it lay in state at Independence Hall.

Not until Lincoln's death nearly a decade later did the nation again pay such homage to one of its citizens.

Extraordinary as was America's affection for Dr. Kane, even more extraordinary was the fact that the man lived long enough to achieve that affection. At eighteen, bedridden with a severe case of rheumatism complicated by a chronic heart condition, doctors gave him six months, perhaps a year, to live. These were just the beginning of young Kane's afflictions. Later he got rice fever in China, the plague in Alexandria and coast fever in Africa. Bedouins wounded him in Egypt. He was nearly killed in the Mexican War, and came even closer to extinction while wandering over the icy hummocks of the Arctic.

Those years in the Arctic—two scurvy-ridden, hazardous years which in the end led to his death—were Dr. Kane's claim to fame and adoration. For his exploits in those vast polar wastes he gained the accolade as America's first great Arctic explorer. His achievements were considerable enough to help pave the way a half century later for Peary's dash to the Pole. For science, Kane laid foundations for the study of the Arctic. He located the magnetic pole, charted the tides and drift of the ocean, and accumulated invaluable data on polar weather. For the nation, he put the American flag the farthest north, at that time, of any in the Western Hemisphere. With the advent of Kane, the British monopoly on Arctic exploration was broken, and America became supreme in another field of endeavor.

A lot can happen to a man during two years of isolation in the Arctic; and Kane forgot none of it in the account he published soon after returning to the States. He told his story well; so well that even today "Arctic Explorations" remains one of the greatest tales of adventure written by an American. The public of 1856 was immensely taken with the book. From the day of publication it was a success, and in the first year alone stirred over a million readers. It made the publishers a fortune, and eventually became an all-time best seller. For nearly a decade it had the place of honor alongside the Bible on nearly every parlor table in the land.

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Readers' Comment

At Random

GENTLEMEN, HUSH:
I am a professional dishwasher, and for eight hours a day I work in a cubbyhole that was designed for a dwarfed midget. After diving to the depths an incalculable number of times, I go home to do housework for my family. When that little stint is finished, I feel that I have been cramped and confined both physically and mentally. Do I get drunk? Do I kick our faithful dog?

No. I get out the latest BLUE BOOK, open it at random. It's a certainty whatever the subject may be it will be a delightful surprise. After that first story I pick and choose. Gentlemen, have you ever heard of a better method or a better magazine?

Helene Parrish

Without Benefit of Advertising

How do you do it? I have always been under the impression that the higher-class advertising a magazine carried, the higher the caliber of articles and stories it could carry. Without assistance from the advertising departments of large corporations you seem always to manage to score tops in fact, fiction and filler.

Would like to pass along the appreciation of other fellows in our ward. We all thoroughly enjoy the copies of BLUE BOOK that come our way and almost consider it a veterans' magazine. The nurses are not adverse to copping them off for their own reading pleasure, so don't consider your mag is strictly masculine in appeal.

I noticed in a recent issue a worthwhile suggestion that readers send their copies to bedridden veterans. May I add that Canadian vets would welcome back issues. Address these to:

Educational Office (For Vet. Ward Distr.)—Department of Veterans' Affairs (Any large Canadian city)

John C. Craig

A Tale from History Preferred

THERE is nothing I enjoy reading quite as much as a good tale from the pages of history; fact or fiction.

In my opinion, your stories along this line are the best to be found on today's magazine racks. For pure relaxation and enjoyment, I read BLUE BOOK's tales of the Vikings and loyal young *Sir Dinadan*, but as what you might call a specialist, I particularly enjoy, especially for their accurate historical data, your articles dealing with the 1750 to 1850 period.

So if I may propose a toast, it is: "Here's to the Historical Department!"

William Gilkerson

BLUE BOOK

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Painted by John Fulton.

The short stories and novels herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence.

PHILLIPS WYMAN, *Publisher* DONALD KENNICOTT, *Editor*

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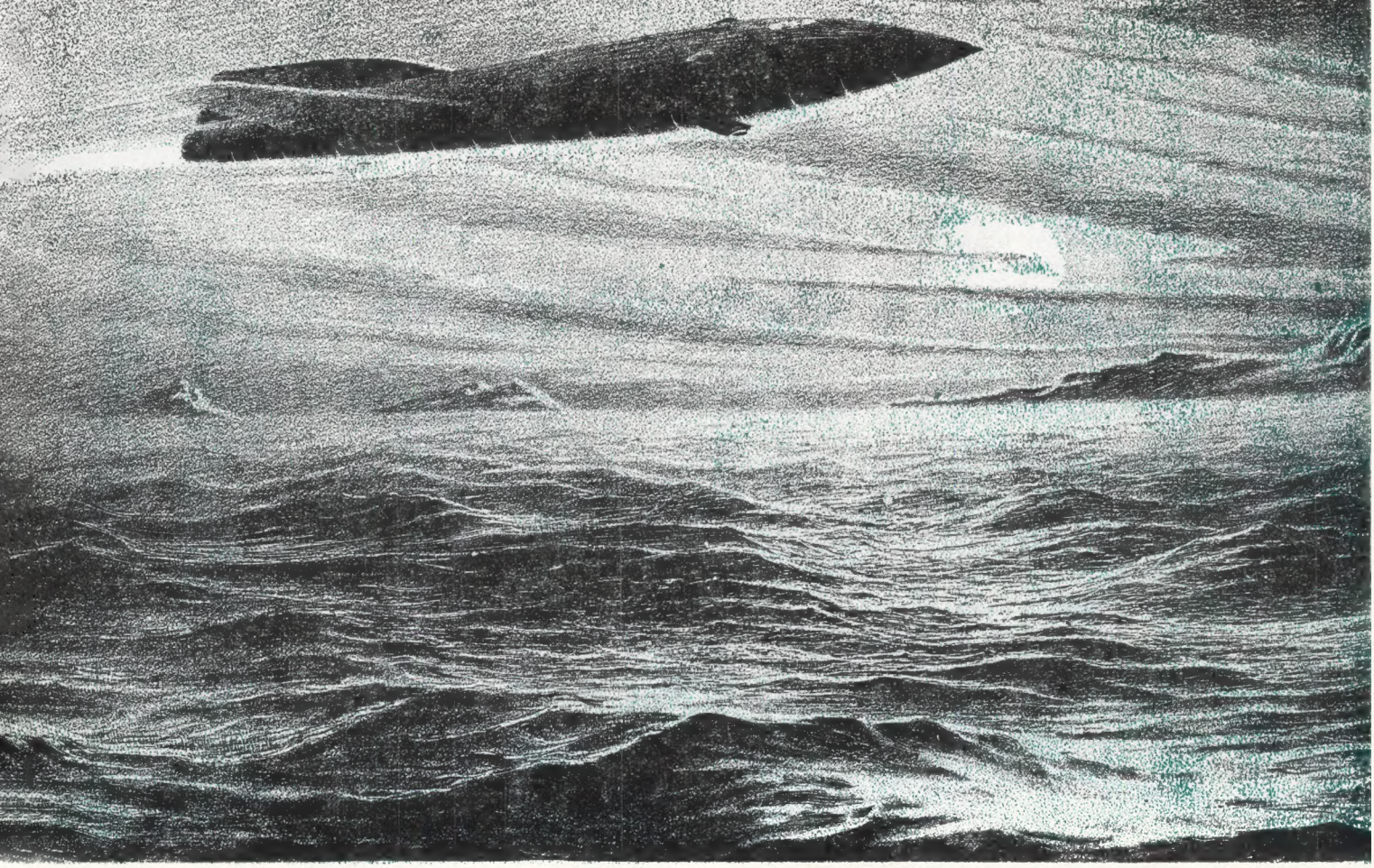


Second Genesis

THROUGH the foreport the vault of the night could be seen with its vivid scattering of stars, the cross-hairs being lined on a minor orb dead ahead. Yes, a minor orb, small, red, of little importance relative to the mighty host around and beyond it.

From end to end of space gleamed the mighty concourse of suns—blue, white, golden and cherry-colored. Some were giants burning in colossal solitude. Others huddled in groups like fiery families. Many were more gregarious, flaming in close-packed ranks to fling sparkling curtains across the dark, or form glowing clouds of inconceivable dimensions, or rotate themselves in mass to create titanic swirls beyond which lay others and again still more.

Amid all this, one small red sun burning modestly as if overawed by the vastness around it—maidenly shy and conscious of its own insignificance. But the cross-hairs kept on it, selecting it for special attention, choosing it as the one true beloved from a myriad of greater beauties. There was reason for this special attention: its name was Sol—and that was almost another word for home.

The man behind the cross-hairs, keeping the tiny ship steady on its drive, was called Arthur Jerrold, a pilot-engineer by profession, a near-suicide by choice. His light gray eyes contrasted with his pure white hair. His features were a mass of fine lines, a living map of where he'd been. He was thirty years old, also two thousand and thirty years old.

It was that latter fact that filled him with anxiety and a good deal of nostalgia as he looked at the sun called Sol. Three years ago he had hurtled outward, leaving it behind his tail, deserting it as one throws away his heart when others beckon more enticingly. Now he was coming back, and Sol was some two thousand years older.

"Think carefully," they had warned him, "lest later you are racked with vain regrets. Within that ship you will be in a tiny artificial universe of your own; you will be in your own space, your own peculiar time. There is no other way to reach so far."

"I know."

"Nor will you meet another of your kind in some strange far-off field. This is one of those experiments that are not repeated until we have weighed and estimated the results of the first."

"Somebody has to do it first. I'm ready."

"When you return—if ever you do return—the world you knew may be well-nigh unrecognizable. You will be a relic of its past. Perhaps none will remember you even by hearsay. All those you once held dear will be so long gone that their names will

More islands in a long string suggestive of an underlying mountain range. All jungle-covered, green and moist, with the eternal seas nibbling at their edges.

HERE WE SUPPOSE THAT MAN IS GIVEN ONE MORE CHANCE TO REDEEM HIMSELF AND THE CIVILIZATION OF THE WORLD HE HAS DEVASTATED.

by ERIC FRANK RUSSELL

Illustrated by BRENDAN LYNCH

have vanished from the book of life, and their resting-places will be beyond anyone's power to find. You will have been away *two thousand years.*"

"I'm ready, I tell you."

So they had fêted him and made much of him, and launched him amid a worldwide thunder of huzzahs. After that, he'd been on his own, just he and the ship, with Sol sinking and shrinking unseen behind the tail.

Now he was coming back. All he had to show for his Odyssey was his data on soundings of the great depths, a long, magnificent story of flaming orbs and whirling spheres, and the rise and fall of far-away civilizations and strange, almost incomprehensible barbarities.

Plus, of course, the countless seams on his face matched by the longitudinal scars on his ship. They were young and vigorous and full of intense vitality, he and the little ship; yet both were incredibly old, stamped with the mark of long years and great experiences.

Pluto was the outpost, the pointer down the starry lane. He swooped over it in a high arc and bulleted onward. Uranus was on the other side of Sol, and Neptune—far to his left; but Saturn was only slightly off his course, and Jupiter loomed almost straight in front. Maybe they were settled now, to what extent humans could settle them. Much can happen in twenty centuries.

For a moment he toyed with the notion of transferring the ship to normal time and making a swift circumnavigatory inspection of Saturn and Jupiter's satellites. It would be good to see outcroppings of slanty roofs and tall towers that identified the haunting-places of mankind.

But he resisted the temptation. To jump out of his own superfast time-rate would delay things unbearably. In the neighborhood of Mars would be the proper place to change over. He contented himself by curving over the big planets and again marveled at the way in which temporal ratios made them appear to whirl and move at tremendous rates. Even after three years of it, he was still amazed that he could discern any features of space at all, much less distortedly; for one hour on the ship was roughly one month on Earth. So relatively fast did the sands of time run out in the exterior universe that his course for Sol described a fine curve which compensated for the system's Vegadrift.

Jupiter swung grandly to the rear, it and its circling children seeming to move at some seven hundred times' their accustomed velocities. The Asteroid Belt had similar acceleration, its multitude of rocks and midget worlds appearing elongated by the sheer rapidity of their passing. Then Mars, the home world's next-door neighbor, pink and shining, like a lightship telling the far voyager of coming landfall.

Here was the point of readjustment. Jerrold braced himself and flipped a knife-switch. A terrible blackness momentarily encompassed his mind; a fragmentary but powerful nausea seized his body. It was as if a multimillion submicroscopic feet had stamped down hard to put the brakes on every vibrating molecule of his being. The effect was always the same, despite that he had used the switch times without number while scouting an army of distant suns. There was no getting hardened to it; one could only take the strain and wait for it to pass.

So it came, and tore at him, and went away, leaving him shaken but whole. Another line had been written upon his face. Another hair might have been whitened had it not already been silvery.

Now Mars was slowed to its old familiar pace. Its minutes were ship's minutes, its hours ship's hours. By contrast with former hugely zipped-up motions, the whole cosmos had suddenly become sedate. One could look forward and downward and see Phobos and Deimos circling the Red Planet like temple dancers rotating around a bland and silent god.

There were people on Mars that day two thousand years ago. Not many of them; just a small colony of metallurgists and mining engineers with their wives and families. A little redstone town with twenty streets, one oxygen plant and a widening ring of boreholes and quarries had formed their touch of Terrestrial civilization. They had called the place Lucansville after an aged, toothless nosey-poke who had first discovered osmiridium in the Plains of Whispering.

In that long-gone day when the ship gleamed fitfully overhead before switching onto the endless trail, the folk of Lucansville had fired a dozen gigantic star-rockets in his honor. Shooting balls and wavering streamers and wide cascades of brilliant green had illuminated the heavens for half a minute—and that had been man's last farewell to man.

If the riches of Mars had held out, the boreholes reached new treasures, the quarries continued to surrender wealth, Lucansville might well be a metropolis by this time, a replica of the best that home had to offer. A place of wide avenues between splendid edifices. A city whose people could walk in pride, knowing their own mightiness.

He went down to see them.

They were not there.

The vessel went three times round, traveling low while gray eyes searched the landscape. From the Crown of the Snow King to the Crown of the Snow Queen, they were not there. From

The feet could be sensed rather than seen. They stood before him, shapeless yet shaped, immaterial yet undeniably there.

the Mountains of Desire to the Plains of Whispering, they were not there.

Only the red earth, the blue-green lichens, the eastering dust-clouds and an eerie inward voice murmuring: "Nothing, nothing, nothing."

Jerrold lifted the boat, pointed for Terra. He was both phlegmatic and hopeful. It had been so easy to expect too much of Mars despite that there had never been a lot to recommend it. Coldness, dust-devils, thin air and the need to carry oxygen flasks wherever one went. A brief whiff of reviving gas whenever the lungs became tired. A world of sniffers established to cope with odd veins of rare metals good for only as long as they lasted, and likely to give out at any time. Lucansville had served its purpose, been abandoned and dissolved into the red dust. Once again Mars had lost its higher life and was left to float in the cosmic cold with its deserts, its dust and its mystery-pylons the origin of which no man knew. But Terra lay ahead.

It could be seen now as a thin white halo a fraction to one side of Sol. Near it, the smaller gleam of Luna. There was home. There was the world that had dreamed the ship, and planned it with clever brains, built it with cunning hands. There was the vital sphere that had provided the metals, the dielectrics, the instruments, the courage, determination, optimism, the very life-form that was its pilot.

BOTH of them, man and vessel, strained eagerly forward as the target grew larger. Art Jerrold felt an overpowering urgency while his damp hands mastered the controls and his gaze remained fascinatedly upon the halo. The ship seemed to sense it also. The engines purred with delight; the wake-flame grew long, steady and brilliant; the control-responses were prompt and willing.

Luna dropped beneath, then fled sidewise, crater-pitted and pale. Earth loomed up large, its continental outlines clearly defined as the ship sped round to the sunward side. Next, the vessel was skimming the fringes of atmosphere, dipping in, heating up, going out and dipping in again. This roller-coaster technique was the normal deceleratory process, providing neither the time nor the place for closer looks at the destination.

One and a half times round was sufficient. Velocity fell low enough to avoid a burn-up through thicker air. The boat went down, penetrating a thick layer of cloud and flattening out level with the expanse of whitecapped heaving sea.

This descent upon a world had been performed so often that Jerrold

handled the controls subconsciously. He had done more of it than any man living, could swoop and draw close and examine a million square miles of terrain while the vessel seemed to fly itself in sentient coöperation. One could have a surfeit of worlds and—after the hundredth or two-hundredth—become cool, calculating, undisturbed, even somewhat lacking in the capacity for surprise.

But this was different. This was Terra. He had never felt so excited in his life.

THE seas raced past. He kept wide-eyed watch ahead, fingers moist and nervous, queer little thrills running up and down his back. His mind was in turmoil.

Here there are no deadly dart-beetles, no strangler-trees, no wave-lattice life-forms like uncommunicative, incomprehending ghosts, no searing sun, no host of maddening moons. Here the ship was made and I was born and a mighty audience cheered us on our way. Here lurked the little school in the woods, and the swimming-pool where Rudy stayed down seventy seconds and scared the wits out of us all.

A deep frown corrugated his forehead, and he chewed at his bottom lip. Of course, the school would not be here. Nor Rudy either. Joe and Jean and Mimi and little low-voiced Sue, they'd gone for keeps. *It's hard to think they're gone—but I got fair warning. Mustn't think of such things. I've only myself to blame.*

There will be plenty of other folk around, some of them remarkably like Rudy and Mimi and the rest. There will be other little schools and candy-shops and warm, clanging smithys where the sparks fly upward. Why the deuce do I think of things like those? I'm thirty. I'm grown up. Be your age, Jerrold!

All right: there will be bright little homes with windows shining in the dark. And woodland walks scented with pine-resin and herbs. I'll make new friends and settle down. Somewhere there will be a girl waiting for me, though she doesn't realize it, and I don't either. We will know it only when we meet each other. Perhaps later on. . . .

Four tiny islands broke the monotony of ocean, rushed beneath, fled backward. He caught no more than the briefest glimpse of unbroken surfaces of treetops, ragged rings of silver beaches, outer rings of reefs and foaming breakers.

It would have been nice to land and breathe the air, pat the earth, smell the leaves, admire the flowers, whistle at the birds, shout and sing. A preliminary letting off of steam before the final sit-down.

Nice, but it could not be done. Not enough room. The slightest overshoot would take him nose-first into a coral barrier or plunge him into the deeps.

More islands in a long string suggestive of an underlying mountain range. All jungle-covered, green and moist, with the eternal seas nibbling at their edges.

They came and went far too quickly for him to gloat over the possibility of seeing a palm-roofed village, an upturned face, a waving hand.

All he could see were splashes of color, green surrounded by white and blue. Would there still be palm-roofed villages after two thousand years? Why not? At the time he went away, they had already existed through four thousand. Besides, in the most efficient and greatly developed world, they would preserve sanctuaries of simplicity.

Land and a great mountain! The ship gained altitude, engines humming, tubes drumming. Seas and trees and the big black mountain! Fiery-tailed, the vessel soared over a jagged peak, breaking into a cloud and coming out again.

It was not continental land; merely another and bigger island. Plenty large enough to have a main anchorage, a busy port and perhaps a dozen fishing villages.

No sign of active communities from what little he could see. At present velocity his minimum circle would have been radius of thirty miles: too great to permit a proper survey. The alternative was to reduce the circle by cutting down velocity, and he did not want to do that.

A METROPOLITAN center of civilization was his goal, preferably one near to his original point of departure, near the places so long remembered though now forgotten by a world.

The eventual rise of a continental land-mass showed familiar outlines. Nearer, he became certain: it was the great wall of the Andes. There was a song in his heart as he let a side-tube blast, and the ship's nose swung round to point north.

Seas and islands for hundreds of miles, and then a neck of land with a wide gulf beyond. At this point the first spasm of uneasiness came over him. Clearly defined by the noonday sun, the isthmus below was that of southern Mexico. He looked at it as he arrowed across, and the song inside him faltered and died away.

The hills were brown, the valleys green with thin glistening streaks showing where rivers wound down to the sea. But something was wrong; something was not as it had been two thousand years ago and still should be today.

He was already over the gulf when he identified the missing feature: there were no checkered patterns on the surface of the earth. A uniform green crept along the valleys, enjoying the shelter of the hills and the moisture of the streams. Nothing broke it up into variegated squares and oblongs. No walls, no fences, no irrigation systems, no contrast of differently colored crops. No paths, no roads, no habitations of any kind. On the rim of the gulf should have stood the one-time city of Vera Cruz. It was gone, entirely gone.

At least, he thought it was gone. Lacking the navigational instruments of landbound vessels, Jerrold had to depend solely upon memory of past topography. He could be wrong—yet he remembered Vera Cruz with a wealth of detail. In the manner of his high-flying kind, he could picture it with fair accuracy, from above, as seen at a cloud-base.

SPEED gave him little time to ponder that problem. He was across the gulf with the mainland rushing under the foreport just as his mind registered the worrying fact that he had seen no surface ships or air machines.

Land swept by. Bending forward, half out of his seat, he studied it anxiously. Miles of it, leagues of it, rolling by at tremendous pace. The ship went lower, so that it had to leap occasional hills, buttes and ridges. It jumped a mountain range, swung to follow a valley, traced a river to the sea, drummed across a harbor, over a headland and went back into deep country.

Like a hopelessly confused pigeon seeking the way to its loft, the boat scoured the territory in huge circles, zigzagged east-west and again north-south. At dusk it landed on a smooth plain, sliding toward the rim of the dying sun, cutting a long brown rut in the virgin green.

Jerrold came out and watched the sun go down without really seeing it. The feel of earth beneath his feet went unnoticed, completely devoid of its anticipated thrill. Neither did he perceive the waving grasses, the distant trees, the pink streamers in the sky. He was as one blinded by a vision of the impossible.

This was Terra, and yet not Terra, because there were no Terrans. Hereabouts, as nearly as he could tell, had been his launching-place, with seven towns just over the horizon, and a hundred roads radiating from them, and steel rails running from one to the other. Great stone towers and lattice masts and a spiderweb of power lines had marked the landscape, while countless air machines roared above. There had been fields of wheat and corn, barley and alfalfa, painting the

scene in straight-edged jigsaw patterns.

Strong men in blue denims and women with sunbonnets had worked around here. You could stand and listen and hear for miles the sound of their voices, the clatter of their machines. Oaths and laughter—a voice calling to another across three fields. Smells of turned earth, warm crops, hot metal, engine oil and an occasional whiff of tobacco.

Now all were gone. The plain stretched undisturbed way back to the far hills. Grasses rustled in a breeze that bore no human sounds, no odors of life. Clouds drifted along with cold indifference. The sun went down at last, sucked away its streamers. Purple darkness encompassed the plain, the ship and the man—and there were no windows to light the way. . . .

With the morning, Jerrold felt better. Lack of sleep encourages morbidity. Early to bed and long hours in the bunk made up in large part for what he had missed on the homeward trip. The sun smiled out of a clear blue sky. The grass was fresh with dew. Small birds chittered querulously outside the lock, urging him to get up and come out.

Emerging, he stretched his arms, combed his fingers through white hair. Thrilled anticipation came back, driving out remnants of disappointment and feelings of tragedy. After a meal he perked up enough to whistle a gay little tune as he walked around the ship and examined its outer condition.

THE world is a big place; two thousand years is a considerable slice of history. *Maybe they've discovered how to live without the bother of cultivating foodstuffs. Maybe they've reduced their numbers and clustered together some place else, enjoying companionship freed from the necessity of toil, independent of agriculture. Perhaps they've concentrated themselves in six, twelve or twenty super-cities, and are having one heck of a good time.*

Satisfied that the boat stood in no need of repair, he went inside, closed the lock and went up in further search of his kind.

He headed first for New York—but there was no such place: only two rivers parted by a woody island. London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid, Peking, Sydney, Los Angeles, Rio de Janeiro, all were empty names that had become as if they had never been. All over the world the good earth had become the property of vegetation, insects, birds and smaller animals. Of men there were none.

Eight times round the ship went, and found not a house, not a human. But here and there, in places part shielded from eroding elements, were vague signs that men had been within the scheme of things. Here and there were traces as baffling as the mystery-pylons of Mars.

From a great altitude could be detected faint square shadows in the sands where once the Pyramids had stood. Slight, almost imaginary criss-crossings of discoloration in the grass marked the one-time sites of London and Des Moines. At twenty thousand feet Jerrold felt sure he could define the avenues and streets of Cincinnati.

Seven areas in the world were scarred by groups of gigantic craters, old and overgrown, quite without radio-activity. First views of these irresistibly suggested a bloody holocaust that might have wiped out a large portion of humanity. The sight of the last such place made him think again.

There a cluster of twenty-eight craters linked two rivers, formed a string of reservoirs and effectively drained a huge area of marshland. This made him go back for a second look at the others. They were the same. Manifestly, all had been blasted with calculating care designed to effect some big improvement to adjacent terrain.

On a sheltered cliff-face in the south of France he discovered what was left of a once deeply carved message now dissolved to near-invisibility. It could be seen and read only from a very flat angle when the morning sun's rays struck across the surface.

Later, he found it again, in identical lettering, repeated in twelve places far distant from each other. Also more that looked as if they might have read the same had they not eroded beyond decipherability. He made a careful note of the message, warning, slogan or whatever it might be, intuitively feeling that once it had been displayed everywhere, without cease, all over the world.

It read: *WAR* Q!

Hope cannot live without nourishment. Raking a planet for what it has to offer was nothing new to Arthur Jerrold, but this time he was seeking his own. There were none to find, not one.

HE made sure of this. He made doubly sure. He scoured the Earth from pole to pole, gave particular attention to remote hiding-places where possibly any remnants of a great disaster might yet linger, even sought evidence of flight underground. And after all that, he took the ship out to Luna, then to Venus, made another search of Mars and came back. A pathetic desperation had kept him going until in the end the flame of hope flickered and sank low.

Then and only then did he plant his little craft for keeps, and grimly review his own unique position.

The ship lay in a gentle valley where, so far as he could tell, the path had run down to the railroad crossing where he and Rudy and Sue had sat on the fence and waved at friendly engineers. That had been far back in memory's misty dawn. Two thousand years ago!

NOW humanity was no more. One could be certain of that. They could not have transferred themselves elsewhere, not three thousand millions of them. Such a mighty exodus would take far longer than he had been away, even if an immense armada could shift them at the rate of a million a year.

He sat on a smooth, tilted rock, his back to the vessel that had served so well, his white hair stirred by a warm breeze. The gray eyes that had kept calm and steady in the face of a thousand dangers were still calm, undefeated, but immeasurably sad.

Something had happened beyond imagining. What, he did not know, could not discover. There weren't any clues, because it had occurred long, long ago; and the hand of time had obliterated causes and effects.

Or there was one possible clue, useless since it was untranslatable. Taking a slip of paper from his pocket, he pondered over the copy he had made.

WAR Q!

The only plausible guess he could offer was that some line-up of circumstances had precipitated a series of major conflicts ending with humanity's end. Possibly they had lettered the outbreaks alphabetically, the seventeenth one—Q—being the last. Maybe this was a slogan, part of the accompanying spate of propaganda designed to maintain the morale of people doomed to extinction.

He could not have been more wrong, but he was never to know it. Semantic modifications and linguistic changes over many centuries had turned him into a comparative illiterate, and he would never know that, either. The now-archaic language which he still used misled him hopelessly so that he could not recognize the clipped form and simplified spelling of the word BEWARE; neither could he identify a long-discarded capital letter as the stylized drawing of a hateful bacillus.

He could never know that humanity had left the stage of life non-explosively, more or less accidentally, and mostly as the unfortunate result of making something not theirs to create. Some experiments are for Man, some for Another.

So he sat on the stone, elbows on knees, chin on hand, lonely, sick at heart, bitter, resentful and yet strangely full of fight. Whatever had occurred, he decided, made no difference in the fact that he was the last man, the very last.

Ultimately there had to be a last man, anyway, but it could have happened more gloriously and at later date. It could have happened to someone changed beyond dreaming by countless millennia, so old that he was tired, content to sleep forever while the rest of humankind roamed among the stars. It need not have happened now, when the last man had come bearing gladsome news to a world that had always yearned for space.

His fists were tight, his knuckles white as he made decisions with grim disregard for the futility of battle.

All have gone but me. There are no others. But while I live, mankind still lives. I will build myself a rock house and give it a chimney. I will warm it with log fires, and the chimney will send smoke toward the skies, and the stars will peer down and know that man still lives. There will be one home, one window glowing through the night, one garden worshiping the sun by day—because man still lives.

Then, for the briefest moment, reaction set in, and he covered his eyes and murmured: "Oh, God! Oh, God!"

And when it had passed, he looked slowly along the grass and saw the mighty feet.

He could not gaze upward. If he had summoned every fiber of his being, he could not look up. The feet!

Nothing like these existed within two thousand years of space-travel. He knew that beyond doubt, for it was he of all men who had been to see. And he dared not let his eyes follow the feet upward to some colossal height and unbearable culmination. It would be more than human spirit could stand.

The feet could be sensed rather than seen. They stood before him, shapeless yet shaped, immaterial yet undeniably there, of no estimable size or proportions, compounded of the stuff of thought, and of mists and of far-away star-clouds. Their surfaces embodied multitudinous elusive, eye-twisting planes, almost as if while standing there they were simultaneously standing in a thousand other dimensions.

Jerrold had more than enough experience of lower, or equal or stupendously different life-forms to know when he was in the presence of a higher. The effect was hypnotic. The strength within him was not enough to save him from being paralyzed by a mighty awe—though still he had no fear, no fear at all. Man is not afraid, not even the last man.

The little house. A chimney giving forth smoke. I am the last, but I will show them. I will tell the stars.

"Sleep!" came an order into his mind, an irresistible order: *"Sleep!"*

He slumped onto his back, his lidded eyes staring where they dared not look when open.

The feet moved a fraction, their countless planes shifting and angling into each other. Came a long-drawn sigh susurrating from the very limits of the space-time continuum. It expressed infinite patience.

"Nothing for it but to try again."

He took something from the sleeper's side, extended its cellular structure of blood and flesh and bone, shaped it, and breathed into it the breath of life.

Leaving the woman to await the man's awakening, the Stranger went away.

His Fathers' Son

FROM Allan Haines' farm it was a brisk fifteen-minute walk across the grain-stubble, to Porter's camp on the lane, and Allan slowed his pace for the last few yards, not to arrive hurried or panting, but with dignity.

Under the giant water-oaks were parked a new jeep and a shiny trailer-house of the largest size. At a shaded table, two men in hunting-brown sipped beer, a third sprawled on a cot with a magazine. Allan had not expected hard-eyed men wearing shoulder-holsters, like in the movies; but this was too commonplace. It could have been any wealthy sportsman's camp, and for a moment Allan wondered if he had come to the right place.

The fat man on the cot was most impressive, and Allan asked him, dubiously: "Mr. Porter?"

The fat man nodded toward the two under the awning, and the smaller man there spoke without rising, in a pleasant baritone.

"I'm Bill Porter. You want something?"

Allan gestured vaguely. His chest felt constricted, and his voice squeaked on the first word he spoke. Perhaps this was not the way to do it, after all.

He said: "That's my ranch, the next one over. I'm Allan Haines—Vince's father."

Porter rose quickly. Like the camp, the man did not match Allan's preconceptions—small-boned, neat, with a pleasant smile and a shrewd eye, he could be any successful businessman.

"That Vince is a great kid!" said Porter, and to the dark lean man at the table: "Slim, beer for Mr. Haines. Or something solid? Scotch?"

"Nothing," Allan said. Porter had come a step away from the table, but Allan stood with his hands uncompromisingly behind him, and Porter hesitated.

"I came over to talk about Vince," Allan said. Forgetting his prepared speech, so firm but reasonable, he blurted: "That shotgun you gave him. I wish you hadn't."

Porter shrugged. "Anyone who shoots like Vince deserves a good gun. That mail-order thing wasn't worth packing."

"I gave it to him. He'd get a better gun when he earned it. And—well, for a couple of weeks he's been hunting with you, and eating here, and going to town with you, and today to the city for you, in your car."

"The kid likes driving the big car. I let him run down to pick up some fight tickets. Didn't mean to keep him from the farm work."

"That's not what I mean!" Allan cried. A week's worry, focusing here, blotted out the picture he had made of himself quietly dominating this man Porter. That had been dream-stuff, anyhow, and this was the reality: Porter listening with a growing frown, and the slim man looking uneasy; but he went on with it.

"Vince can't afford a car like that, a gun like that; but he'll want them, he won't be satisfied with what he—we can afford."

PORTER sat down, sipped conservatively from his beer bottle, and murmured: "Kid ought to be ambitious."

"Ambitious for the right things. But if he thinks money comes easy. . . . He's young; he admires you; he even t-talks like you." Emotional tension made Allan stammer slightly.

"I'm f-flattered."

The brief hesitation might have been accidental, but Allan's face reddened and his voice went a notch higher.

"He sees you have money and envies you, and doesn't see the rest of it—how you get your money, that it's not honest money!" Allan blurted it out shrilly.

Porter set down the beer-bottle with a thump. "If you just came to call names, better shove off."

"It's the truth! Vince will get over this hero-worship unless— I could make him send the gun back, only that wouldn't help. But I'll pay you for it, if you'll move."

"What? Move where?"

"Anywhere! Go back to the city! Let him alone!"

"You've been out in the sun too long. Go home and lie down," Porter said harshly. "I'll take a lot from Vince's old man, but there are limits."

THE worry had been building up in Allan too long. He had hidden it from his wife, from Vince; and now that it was out in the open he could not control it; he shouted: "I could have gone roundabout to move you, but I wanted to be fair with you. But if you won't let him alone, I'll see that you get out! This is a decent community—we don't want racketeers here!"

"That'll be all from you!" Porter cried. The slim man coughed nervously. "Wake up! Vince is man-sized; he comes here of his own accord. If he doesn't want to be a farmer, you think you can make him? As for moving, I like it here."

"I'll move you! You—you gangster!" Pink and panting, Allan took a step toward Porter. The fat man, who had come behind him softly as a ghost, caught his elbows. Allan kicked frantically a moment, then, rather late, remembered his dignity and stood stiff but trembling.

"I ought to kick your tail home," Porter said, his eyes glittering hard as glass. "Be glad I'm patient, and that I like your kid. Vince is welcome here any time, but if you come back calling names—"

Letting the threat go unspecified, Porter nodded at the fat man. Released, Allan swung blindly, and the grinning fat man batted the blow aside with professional ease. Allan was helplessly indignant as a man-handled calf, and feeling himself about to weep with rage, he turned and started homeward, half-running, but hearing the slim man's drawl and Porter's clipped answer.

"Your temper's going to get us in trouble, Bill."

"Think I'll take that stuff? Next time I'll let Nick ruin him."

HE'D BEEN DAZZLED BY THESE FREE-SPENDING MEN FROM THE CITY. BUT WHEN THE CHIPS WERE DOWN, HE HELD A GUN AS STEADILY AS HIS GRANDFATHER.

by OWEN CAMERON

"You've been out in the sun too long. Go home and lie down," Porter said harshly.

By the time Allan came to his own neat farmstead, his muscles had stopped jerking, though shame and anger stayed knotted in his stomach. His wife Edith was busy in the big kitchen, but he managed to say some casual word, and she hardly glanced at him as he went on through the hallway and upstairs.

He sat on the bed, waiting for the impotent rage to fade, so he could think. In the next room, he heard his mother at her endless housekeeping. Even when she read, or listened to the radio, the old lady's hands must be busy.

Allan had always hated the things Porter stood for, and now he hated the man himself. He could have ignored Porter, knowing that one individual cannot change the world, and that the Porters were a fixed part of today's world, but there was Vince, with a man's strong body but a boy's open heart, speaking of Porter with his eyes shining. . . .

His mother looked into the room. Her faded blue eyes searched his face, but she merely said: "Lunch-time."

"I'm not hungry." It was the wrong thing to say.

"You come down and eat, Allan. What's wrong?"

"Nothing."

She smiled indulgently. "Easy to tell when there's something on your mind. Just like him." She glanced at a picture on the wall, beside the old-fashioned bureau.

Allan was startled. "Me? Like Grandfather?"

"Oh, you don't look like him, but in the way Vince is like you. He was the same sort of neat, stubborn man."

Allan had been thinking about Grandfather, that morning. Going to Porter's camp was what the old man would have done, but with what a different result! Allan had pictured himself confronting Porter, cool but deadly, as Grandfather must have put down outlaws in the old days. Instead, he had made a fool of himself. The bitter memory made his throat tighten.

"I couldn't be like him if I tried."

His mother murmured words he didn't catch, then asked: "Something about Vince?"

"No! What gave you any such idea?"

"The two of you. What is it?"

"Don't talk foolishness," he said harshly, and then besought her: "And don't say anything to Edith."

"She'd see for herself, if her head wasn't full of the church supper. What is it?"

Allan shook his head dumbly, and the old lady frowned.

"Just like him—close-mouthed. It's exasperating to have to sit back and watch men. . . . You'd better wash and come down, if you don't want to worry Edith."

Standing before the mirror to comb his hair, Allan looked from his own reflection to the framed picture of Grandfather. In Allan's memory, he was a brittle old man, but with eyes

terrible and wise as a hawk's, his rare anger fierce as the wrath of God. In fact, as a child Allan had confused God with the old man.

When the picture was taken, Grandfather had been tall and lean, as Vince was now. He had been sheriff of a wild Southwestern county, part of its legend—one of the giants of those days. If he had told Porter to move, Porter would have moved.

"Like you! Who's she kidding?" Allan asked the picture, and glowered at his own image in the mirror: a mild-faced man with pinkish hair and mustache. He had grown the mustache long ago, to look more impressive, but it didn't change the man—hard-working farmer, respectable, unimportant citizen. He thought of Porter, coolly preying on society, not defying but corrupting the law, yet today's Robin Hood for a boy like Vince.

VINCE was honest, but what was honesty? Suppose the tickets he had gone after were for a fixed fight; suppose next time he carried bribe-money in an envelope? Around Porter was no solid ground, only quicksands, and how keep Vince out of them? He would resist any direct control; that was natural.

"I'll move him," Allan told the picture, meaning Porter. "Not the way you would—I'll go to Carlson." Carlson was his neighbor, on whose land Porter was camped.

Edith called from downstairs: what in the world was he doing? Lunch was getting cold.

After the meal, Allan drove round to Carlson's house. The big, blond man listened in growing astonishment, and asked: "You ain't serious, Allan?"

"We don't want people like that here, Carl."

"Why, Bill Porter is all right. Free with his money, too."

"How does he get his money? He's mixed up in gambling, and God knows what else!"

Carlson shook his head. "I take a man for what he is, not for what some city paper hints he is. My wife likes him, too."

"Didn't the Crime Commission question him? He's in with crooks and crooked politicians, and we're honest people."

"If he's crooked, why ain't he in jail? He paid for the hunting rights, and don't leave gates open or shoot over stock, like some. You got him all wrong, Allan."

Allan said, desperately: "I'm asking a favor."

"I'd do anything in reason—my money, or time. But I can't just tell him to get out. You ought to see that."

Allan argued until his insistence irritated the man. From Carlson's he drove to town, and it was worse there. The District Attorney was a new man; but Mack Mackay, the sheriff, who had been a schoolmate, was no more coöperative.

Mackay said patiently: "Allan, no matter what the papers hint, a man's innocent till proved guilty. This ain't Russia."

"He's a racketeer! One of a bunch that buys policemen and judges, but I didn't know they'd done it here."

"No use calling me names, Allan. Porter's a small fish. The men behind protect him. And who's behind them? Good, decent, blind citizens. Like you and me, maybe."

"You think so?" Allan stood up, his stammer returning. "The d-decent people will make you act!"

"I'll do my duty, if Porter breaks a law here. As for the others. . . . He's no hooligan—he's likable, and spends money here. New trailer from Ed Fry, ordered a high-priced shotgun through Spegal's Hardware, and so on. What you got against him, Allan?"

"He's a criminal! What else do I need?"

"No, you wouldn't be upset if it wasn't personal. Same with the others. Not a one will holler until his own fingers get caught in the door, which is the reason men like this Porter—"

Allan cut off the rest by slamming the door, hard, on his way out. He stalked from the courthouse telling himself that a citizens' petition would start a fire under Mackay.

He talked to Morton at the bank, Dan Held at the C. of C., and Spegal in his store. By that time he was bewildered. What was the matter with people? Arguing that Porter was a nice, gentlemanly fellow who spent money freely, and if he was mixed in anything shady, it was in the city, not here.

It was not that his friends and neighbors condoned crookedness, but as Mackay had said, they were not being hurt. And although he had accused the Sheriff of dishonesty, Allan knew in his heart it was untrue.

ALLAN came home with a troubled mind, which was not made lighter by the fact that Vince, for the second night in a row, was not on hand for supper.

"He drove Mr. Porter's big car to the city," Edith explained unnecessarily. "Mr. Porter says Vince is a fine—"

"Porter says? When did you meet him?"

"The other morning, when Vince was hunting with him. Where were you? Oh, downtown. They stopped for coffee and cake." Edith giggled like a young girl. "He ate three pieces, and he's going to the church supper for more."

Allan said, "Vince sees a lot of him."

"Yes," agreed Edith, quite pleased.

"If you believe the newspapers, Porter's not too honest."

"Nonsense! All you have to do is look at him. Vince says he's in politics, and you know what that is. Look at the dreadful things the papers say about the President!"

Allan caught his mother's shrewd glance, and changed the subject by asking a question about the church supper.

Later there were a few chores, and it was dark when he finished, but Allan walked away from the buildings, as he often did at night, along the irrigation ditch. Out there he was in a quiet place in the middle of the world, and the lights of town seemed no closer than the stars overhead. He could smell earth and water and hear the whispering of the night's life. This was truth and reality: the land.

Allan walked on slowly until he could see the lights of Porter's camp. Into his mind popped words spoken by Porter: *If he doesn't want to be a farmer—* Allan had never imagined Vince wanting to be anything else. He wondered how well he knew his son. . . . Suddenly the night was chilly, and he returned to the house.

HE was in the front room, the women in the kitchen, when Vince came home. Allan's imagination had had the boy pinned under smashed metal or tangled in some criminal web, but his natural reaction was anger, immediately after the wave of relief. However, when Vince came into the front room, Allan pretended to be absorbed in his farm magazine.

"Hi," Vince said casually.

"How was the trip?"

"Swell. Man, what a buggy! Really a smooth job."

Allan studied his son, trying to get below the surface. At seventeen, he was man-sized, as Porter had said, with a tough body, a quick eye, and instant reactions. The last made him an extraordinary wing-shot, and his speed and accuracy with a shotgun had to be seen to be believed. Like some of the stories about Grandfather's shooting.

Vince was steady, serious, and already men treated him as a man. *But what else do I know about him?* Allan wondered. *We don't even talk the same language, so how can I know what he thinks?*

He asked, politely: "Had supper?"

"I had a sandwich at Bill's. But you know Mom—she's making some chocolate." Vince yawned, noisily,

"Oh, you don't look like Grandfather, but he was the same sort of neat, stubborn man."

smiled at some thought. "Bill sure knows some characters."

"How's that?"

"Oh, like a guy in town today." Vince glanced quickly at his father, caught himself. "Well, you know. Characters."

Allan nodded, thinking that it was natural they should speak different languages. They lived in different worlds, twenty-five years apart. It was no wonder he could not see Vince's hidden thoughts—if they were hidden. Perhaps it was that he stood too close to see them, while they were plain to Porter. Like the old adage about not seeing the forest for trees.

Vince spoke without looking at his father: "Bill says you were over today. Anything special?"

"Didn't he say?"

"Slim started to make some crack, but Bill shut him up. You wouldn't go over there with me." Vince's glance was uneasy but defiant.

"I happened to be over that way, and wondered what he looked like."

"Oh. I wondered. You don't like Bill, do you?"

"I don't know him, to like or dislike."

"If you knew him, you'd like him," Vince said warmly. "A swell guy! He knows all kinds of people, in his racket, but he's okay."

"Racket?"

"Business, I mean. You don't see anybody lying around his camp drunk, like lots of city hunters. Even women! Bill's here to hunt. He's talking about buying up here, only farther back by the hills, so there'll be deer too, but with water for ducks and fishing."

"Wonderful to be a rich man," Allan said ironically.

"Oh, the place would pay its way—he'd have whitefaces on it, and sheep. Course, he'd have a ranch manager—he's got his business in the city."

Allan was startled. "Manager? You?"

"Gosh, no!" Vince appeared astonished, but next moment said thoughtfully, "He's been asking my advice about things."

Edith came through the long hallway from the kitchen, and Allan escaped upstairs. When he turned on the light in the bedroom, he growled at Grandfather's picture:

"What would you do now? Shoot somebody? Times have changed, though if it came to that, I could." He let it go, knowing he was just talking. Even if times had not changed, he wouldn't buckle on a gun and shoot anyone, for any reason. Law-abiding citizen, he thought contemptuously.

In the morning, at breakfast, Vince said he supposed they should start overhauling the tractor. Allan, his nerves on edge after a bad night, asked sarcastically:

"Not tired of hunting with Porter?"

"Work's got to be done," Vince mumbled.

Allan and his son worked together almost without speech, but as a smooth team. Necessity had made Allan a fair mechanic, but Vince handled tools, like guns, with a touch of genius. Before meeting Porter, he thought a day pleasantly spent, merely probing into the oily entrails of a machine.

Parts were needed, and after lunch Allan drove to town. Edith found errands for him also, as a matter of course, and he parked on Main, near

the bank corner. Thirty minutes later he returned to the sedan, arms full of bundles, which he dropped on the back seat. As he settled himself behind the wheel, a big blue car stopped, double-parked, beside his. Allan had seen the machine at a distance—everyone in town knew it was Bill Porter's car.

The fat man was driving. Porter, face bleak, put his hands on the door of Allan's car and said coldly: "Been waiting for you to come back."

"I— Waiting for me?"

"I've been told what you were up to, yesterday. I've got troubles enough of my own, without your ten cents' worth. I won't have any more of it. Understand?"

His eyes bored into Allan's, insisting upon an answer. He was white with anger, and there was the smell of violence about him. Allan was not afraid, but startled.

"M-more of what?" he asked foolishly.

"You heard me. Are you after trouble with me?"

"I d-don't want trouble with anybody," Allan said. "All I want is—"

Porter interrupted, fiercely: "Then watch yourself! I ought to jerk you out of that car and work you over!"

A policeman on his three-wheeled motorcycle, prowling for traffic and parking violators, touched the horn-button and waved at Porter, ignoring the car double-parked.

Porter's tight fury relaxed abruptly, and he rubbed a hand across his face, sounding almost apologetic. "I've got a crazy temper, Haines. You don't know how close I was to—well, be smart and keep out of my affairs."

The big car had moved on before Allan thought of a retort.

ALLAN drove home, wondering who had passed the word to Porter—the banker, Sheriff Mackay, Spegal? Mackay had hinted that his opposition to Porter was personal; and certainly it was now—himself alone against Porter, who was not alone. Allan never considered heeding the man's warning and drawing back. On his own account he would have avoided trouble, but Vince was involved.

It was not a matter of running Vince's life, or making choices for him. If Vince could be brought to see clearly, he would make the right choice himself—or would he? Allan's hate of dishonesty amounted to horror, and he had taken for granted that Vince felt the same way, and that Grandfather had, also, but was it so? He and the old man were unlike in other ways. Grandfather had been a law-officer, but so had others whose acts had been lawless. There was no reason, Allan realized miserably, that

Illustrated by CLEVELAND WOODWARD

"Go on, kid!" said Porter. "We're just having a talk." Vince ignored him. "Nick, you want to bet I won't get your eyes?"

Vince should draw the sharp line between right and wrong he did, when even respectable men like Spegal and Dan Held could tolerate Porter.

At the farm, Vince was not working on the tractor, but in the house scrubbing himself. Allan asked no question, but the boy said: "I promised Bill I'd do an errand in town. Mom and Gran are going to a show, and I'll leave them off and pick them up later. You going?"

"I'll stay home, though I hate to pass up the chance of riding in Porter's car."

"Why, I told Bill I could use our car."

"Of course." But there was more to this, he knew by Vince's expression.

"Bill wants to talk to this man. I'll pick him up in town and bring him to camp, and then he'll walk back here, and I'll pick up Mom and Gran when I take him to town again." Vince added uneasily, defensively: "Well, Bill's done me a lot of favors."

"Who's the man, and why all the secrecy?"

"I don't know his name. Some political deal, and Bill doesn't want to be seen talking to him. I told him I knew that it would be okay to use our car."

Allan did not like it. Porter's secrets would not be innocent. However, it was unlikely that he would involve an outsider, a boy, in anything really criminal. He said casually: "Go ahead. Just be careful."

Vince had been braced for a scolding, and grinned his relief. "Don't worry. I drive fast, but you know I'm careful."

That had not been Allan's meaning, but he said nothing more, though he wondered who was coming to see Porter so furtively at night. Vince knew nothing about it, not even the man's name. He had said so, and Vince did not lie—ever, Allan insisted to himself.

LATER, when the two women and Vince had gone, Allan walked in the darkness along the irrigation ditch until he could see the lights of Porter's camp. He waited, worried but helpless, for what seemed hours before the headlights of a car turned onto the lane from the county road, to halt at the camp. The car moved away again, and Allan walked swiftly homeward, to be there when Vince arrived.

The boy stopped in the kitchen for an apple and came through the hall

to the front room. He tried the radio, chewing absently, and said to Allan with the appearance of carelessness:

"Just some political stuff, like I said. He'll walk over here, and I'll take him back downtown."

"In time to pick up your mother, I hope."

"Oh, sure. Bill said an hour at the most. He's a fat little guy, so when he comes, you'll know what he wants. I'm going up and write a letter to Betty." Betty was Vince's girl, now visiting in Wisconsin. "She expects me to write every day, but what's there to say?"

"Give her my love."

"Okay. Just holler when Sellers comes back."

Vince was halfway up the stairs before the implications of that struck Allan. He called: "What did you say his name was?"

"Sellers, Bill called him, when I let him off there."

Vince had just learned the name, so he hadn't been lying about that. He never lied, Allan told his jealous and suspicious heart.

When the door to Vince's room closed, Allan went to the bookcase, took out Diseases of the Horse, and a newspaper clipping from the book. Near the bottom of the two-column story, he found what he wanted.

> . . . Chairman Morris told reporters, 'We are determined to get at the truth, and if we do not, it will mean certain men are more powerful than the government of this State.' Morris indicated the commission would soon call Honest Abe Sellers, attorney for Porter, and allegedly his link with more important figures.

The back door opened and shut with a bang. Then silence; and Allan, puzzled, went through the long hallway to the kitchen. A plump man stood in the middle of the kitchen, breathing hard. As Allan stepped into view, he backed away, making a futile, pushing gesture with his hands.

He cried hoarsely: "I thought—where's that kid? Where is that kid with the car?"

Allan said mechanically: "Vince is upstairs. I'll—"

The man stumbled across the room and shook Allan's arm, frenziedly. "Get him! Or— Where's the car? I've got to get out of here!"

He was almost hysterically frightened. His eyes popped, he gasped for air, sweat shone on the fat cheeks. There was dirt on his hands and on the knees of his expensive suit, as though he had run on all fours like an animal.

"What's the matter?" Allan asked. "What's wrong? Are you Sellers?"

The man bobbed his head violently, almost sobbing. "He's crazy. Like a mad dog!"

"Who? What are you talking about?"

"Bill Porter! Listen, I'll give you a hundred—a thousand dollars—the car!"

"You're afraid of Porter? What happened?"

Literally dancing in an agony of fear, the man babbled: "He shot at me! How did he miss me? I ran, but he'll come after me. He's crazy. They'd hide him, in Cuba, look after him till it cooled off, but he went crazy and said he wouldn't be the fall guy, and pulled a gun and— Listen!"

The man froze, staring at the door. Even with his bad opinion of Porter, Allan could not believe this man was in danger of death. Porter was a criminal, but a killer would look *different,* in some way. Still, Sellers' fears were very real.

Sellers mumbled to himself: "I got a wife, a home—I've got to talk, and the Big Boys saw that, they said tell Bill it had to be him. The others saw it, but he went crazy, like a crazy dog." He turned on Allan, frantically: "Get me out of here! He's coming!"

Allan, in his precise, rather slow way, had been putting it together. The Crime Commission had found a way to make Sellers talk; the more powerful men had agreed to sacrifice Porter; and Porter wasn't having any. Allan's reactions were not quick, like Vince's, but they were sure.

He told Sellers: "I'll take you downtown. You'll be safe then?"

"Yes. He wouldn't dare follow me to—"

"Let's go."

Allan started for the front door. Sellers crowded past him in the hallway, opened the door, then slammed it and leaped back, falling to his knees. Sick, shriveling in his clothes, he gasped fishlike before he could form words.

"Nick—out there."

"D-don't get excited," Allan said, excited himself. "I'll phone somebody —the Sheriff."

The telephone was in the hall closet, under the stairway. Allan opened the door, and Sellers scrambled through on all fours, whimpering, to cower against the wall with his eyes closed, underlip quivering. Allan, who always needed to think before acting, still stood with his hand on the knob when Porter spoke his name.

The man had come noiselessly into the kitchen.

"Evening, Mr. Haines." The voice was cool, but even at that distance Allan could see the wildness on Porter's face. "I'm a little uneasy. Friend of mine—nice fellow, but working too hard and nearer to a breakdown than any of us realized—just blew his top. Shot a hole in my trailer and ran off. Hysterical—nerves shot."

Allan said nothing, and Porter continued in that dead, smooth tone: "He's a prominent man. If this got into the papers, it could wreck his career. Probably claim he's Napoleon, or someone's trying to kill him. If I can get him quietly to a doctor— You seen him?"

Allan merely shook his head, and Porter's tone changed.

"He's here. I don't know what he's told you, but he's off his rocker. For his own sake, I'm going to take him."

The man stepped into the hall. Allan cried: "Don't come any closer!"

Porter stopped, said harshly: "Don't be a fool. Go upstairs and forget I was here."

"No. He's in my house."

Porter's voice was suddenly savage. "You fool, you think I care about you? Throw me to the wolves, will they? I'll give them something to worry about. First Sellers, and then—you think I'll let a mug like you stop me?"

Allan said doggedly: "No. It w-wouldn't be right to—"

"Get out of my way!"

Allan tried to sound dangerous. "There's a shotgun here in the closet, so be careful."

There was no gun, but Porter could not know that, and he hesitated, then smiled. "Look behind you."

At the living-room end of the hallway stood the fat man from the camp, pointing a pistol. Allan looked at Porter, and he also now held a gun.

"If he moves, chop him down, Nick," Porter snarled. "Say, where's Slim?"

"Pulled out. He said your temper—and I been thinking. If we go against the big guys, who takes care of us?"

"Let me worry." But Porter hesitated, hefting the gun in his hand.

Allan could hear the sick breathing of Sellers, in the closet. Desperately, he tried to make his mind work, but it never occurred to step back, give up Sellers. That would not be right, wasn't to be considered. Perhaps if he let Porter come close, he could snatch the revolver. A critical part of his mind warned: *Grandfather might do it, but you're not like him.* Stubbornly, he made answer: *Try, anyhow.*

Nick asked, openly worried, "You thought about this, Bill?"

"Listen, after this Sellers would have my scalp, if he's alive. Suppose this one and Sellers are dead, with two guns here? If we do it right—"

Allan's heart pounded heavily, and he couldn't keep the quiver out of his voice. "You won't get away with it."

"You'll never know," said Porter brutally. "Move in, Nick. Grab—"

He broke off, stiffening, and Allan incredulously heard his son's voice, in the kitchen: "Don't move, Bill."

Porter glanced over his shoulder without moving his body, as Vince stepped into sight behind him, the new shotgun ready in his hands. The boy spoke coolly.

"Number two shot—at the face. You know how fast I am."

Porter growled: "Where'd you come from, kid?"

"Out the upstairs window, down the kitchen roof."

Allan had fogotten Vince was in the house. After a stupefied moment, he cried: "Vince! G-get out of this!"

"Go on, kid," said Porter. "We're just having a talk."

Vince ignored him. "Nick, want to bet I won't get your eyes?"

Nick made an uncomfortable noise. Porter tried coaxing.

"I thought you were my friend, kid!"

"I couldn't be friends with a guy who wasn't honest," Vince said. "Only I guess I didn't think much about it, till I heard the conversation from upstairs. Well, I've seen you shoot a pistol; you've seen me handle this gun. What do you think?"

Nick called hoarsely: "Bill, I'm out."

Allan blinked helplessly at his son. So cool, so sure of himself—situation in hand. Where had he learned this? No, it wasn't learned, it was his heritage from Grandfather. The old man must have talked and looked like this.

Porter cursed—all of them, and himself. But the tension was broken; he would not shoot, and his impotent fury was really directed at Nick.

Vince said: "Put your guns on the floor."

Nick stooped, carefully. Porter cursed him, but dropped his own weapon. Allan, understanding his part, stepped into the closet, where Sellers was being violently sick. Allan made contact with Mackay at the Sheriff's house, and Mackay listened to his hurried words, said curtly, "Now you've got something. Be right there," and hung up.

Vince had moved Porter into the living-room with Nick. The two men stood with backs toward him, heads down, sullenly silent. Allan picked up the two hand-guns, holding them awkwardly as he walked to Vince's side.

His son's grin was suddenly boyish. "I'll hate to give back this gun, but I guess I can't keep it now."

"We'll get one like it," Allan said, thinking: *I'm shaking, but he's not even excited. Grandfather over again.*

"You know what?" Vince asked. "While I was upstairs, listening, it was like him, my great-grandfather. Like the time he captured that outlaw, without a gun? What nerve! I had the gun, but was I scared!"

Allan felt a wild desire to laugh. "Maybe we're both chips off the old block—different parts."

"Not so different. I wish Mackay would get here. I got to go after Mom and Gran."

"I'll go along."

"Okay." Vince frowned. "What'll we tell them? You know how Mom worries."

"Ask something about the church supper. Then we won't have to tell anything—just listen."

They smiled at one another in perfect understanding. In the closet, Sellers hiccuped; and far away the sound of a siren began to grow. Porter cursed it, but did not move.

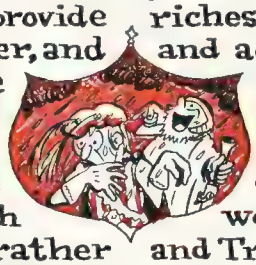
Fine Feathers

A *Martiall* Discourse

by Sir Arthur Gorges Knight, sometime Capn of the Queenes Ship *Wast Spite*, AD 1597. From "Purchas his Pilgrimes," here all newly decked out for modern *Warriors* by that *plainest* of tattered old *Ensigns*:

Peter Wells

And here by the way, a little to digresse, I think it not amisse justly to reprehend and taxe our Nation, for their unproper and vaine manner of going to the Warres, and especially those that had never seene service. For bee hee poore or rich when he first prepares to goe to serve, hee will take more care, and bee at more cost to provide himselfe of a roysting Feather, and a clynkant Coat, then to bee furnished either of fit Armes, or of neccessary clothing to keep out wet and cold: whereby they come both to the Sea and Field service, rather like Maskers than Souldiers, as men apter to bring spoyles for the enemy, then to conquer or win honour from him...



Farre otherwise was the wont and manner of those worthy Romans, that by their wisdome and valour made themselves famous, and Lords over the World, whose glorious examples we doe more willingly read then follow. They going a warfare departed Rome in obedience and strictnesse of Martiall discipline, in sobriety of diet and attire, fitted with Armes, like men that knew that Iron and Steele were mastring mettalls over Gold and Silver, and having atchieved and performed their enterprises, returned then home in triumph, in glory, and in pride, shining in the spoyles and riches of their vanquished Enemies, and adorned with as much sumptuousnesse as they could get, braving therein their conquered Foes, and setting to the shew of the world the fruits of their Valour and Travailes. Whereas wee for the most part contrariwise going out bravely, and returning home again beggarly, leave no other testimony nor records of our Enterprises and Victories, either to the living or posteritie, then the Merchants bookes, wherein we are deep plunged, even to the morgage or sale of our Inheritance, to convert the true honor of Souldery into effeminate pompe and delicacy.

Train to Nowhere?

It stood on a siding in a lonely little valley far out in the hinterland, its engine lazily hissing, while a plume of smoke drifted from the squat sooty stack into the hot Korean sunshine. The line of cars—good sturdy railway carriages—well built and well equipped, were strung back from the tender for a hundred or more yards. An empty gravel roadway stretched its featureless length beside the cars, making a raised but unpaved platform, on the southern end of which perched a ridiculous little station.

There stood the train, steam up and ready to go—ready to cut the breeze in high fashion with wailing horn and singing wheels; but in actuality, she never moved a yard. Hundreds had boarded her, and hundreds had left her while she waited patiently, was fired and watered by a competent crew, was oiled, banked and fired again. But for months on end, she huffed and she puffed, but she never took off.

The name on the station, if you could read Korean ideographs, was Munsan-ni, which referred to a drab collection of thatched mud hovels flanking the main road winding north past the train yard, and a few hundred yards to the west of it. Here was a dingy little farming community in which absolutely nothing ever happened; yet high-powered news-men from all over the democratic world came clattering through it, turning their jeeps into the station driveway in unending procession.

They came to board the train, some to stay but a day or two, some to stay for weeks on end. They came singly, in two's, and by dozens; and they all came with a single purpose—namely, to follow the course of a slow, laborious and all-important conversation taking place thirty miles to the north in a small Chinese teahouse on the outskirts of Kaesong. History was attempting to make a forward step, and the world was listening with patience and anxiety. The train at Munsan, standing within a mile of the base where the UN peacemakers lived and worked, was in reality, a press camp. It was alive with the furious activity of writers, broadcasters and photographers, for Kaesong was the biggest story of the year. The press train, the movable camp that never moved—the "Nowhere Express"—was the nerve-center for that story.

Newspapermen, being among the more practical of workmen, had from the very inception of the peace talks, in early July, worked out a system of coverage which in time became one of those operations for which rival news-men are remarkable—a typical mixture of efficiency and snafu, generous cooperation and throat-cutting scoop tactics. Only twenty news-men were permitted to accompany the peace delegation to Kaesong itself, and those who made the trip did so for purposes of photographing and describing the general background; for no correspondent ever sat in on the talks in person.

The vital copy was built around the daily communiqué brought in by Brigadier General William P. Nuckols, the briefing officer who came from the conference talks to the train to report the day's progress, if any. The communiqué of course was everybody's baby. Personal observations at the conference site were your own. News-men were in accord on the pooling of the Kaesong material, but individual ingenuity was the keynote in transmitting that information to bureaus in Seoul and Tokyo. Sure enough, there was honest journalism aplenty; but there was also the usual feuding with censorship, and more than an occasional spoonful of downright phony sensationalism.

The base camp down the road where the UN peace delegation had their headquarters, was a little group of brown squad tents sprawled through an apple orchard; and it was from this base that the delegates made their daily helicopter flight to the conference site. They were preceded, each day, by a motor caravan of sixteen vehicles, consisting of mess trucks bearing the equipment and personnel of the mess detail for the noonday meal, while other trucks and jeeps bore liaison officers, stenographers, interpreters, and the twenty allotted reporters.

Day after day, this heterogeneous parade of growling trucks would wind

A SPECIAL REPORT ON THE KAESONG CONFERENCES FROM OUR COMBAT ARTIST AT THE FRONT.

by HAMILTON GREENE

down the dusty road to Kaesong, while the 130 officers and men who rode with it would sweat and gossip and hope. Day after day, the tense delegates would gather in the tea-house, where they brooded and scowled and argued. Day after day, Bill Nuckols would return from the conference table with the disheartening report "No progress"—while a dozen miles away the belligerent guns bellowed and flamed, and men of both armies died on the slopes of savage ridgelines. In the whole sordid history, of diplomatic double-talk, I doubt if there has ever been anything to equal those days of alternating hope and despair, excitement and boredom, holy enthusiasm and shattering frustration. It was brutal and wonderful and awful.

BUT in the meantime, the "Nowhere Express" had developed into an institution, a legend, and way of life. It took its character from the people who lived on it, developing inevitably an international flavor from the many costumes, characters and languages that came to swing aboard. There were voluble Frenchmen from the *Agencie France Presse,* stolid (and not so stolid) Britishers from Reuters, polite Japanese, and smiling Filipinos. There were Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders. There were wild ones and sober ones, and they came from all quarters of the world.

They came jouncing in by jeep from the press billets in Seoul, their eyes red and their eyebrows white from twenty miles of rough and dusty roadbed, boarding the train with cameras, typewriters and recording machines. They would drink a beer and say "Hi!" to fellow-workmen. They'd get a bunk from the sergeant, and pay sixty-five cents for a pair of clean sheets—and who the hell wouldn't, if you hadn't seen a sheet in six months to a year.

The first-timers would wander up the empty gravel platform and look at the engine, asking:

"Why do they have steam up all the time?"

"Listen, boy! Those Commie troops are just across the Imjin River, a few miles away, and who's trusting the Commies? This train at any moment may have to bug, and bug fast."

"Okay—okay! But why put the engine up front where she'll have to back the train out? Why not put it in pulling position at the other end, pointed south?"

"My friend, if the shooting starts, let's not make it too easy for the train battalion to jump on the engine, pull the pin, and take off solo. Not that they would really bug without us. But let's be sure."

On the train itself life revolved about a routine of poker and dice, beer and work. There were moments of fierce competition when the briefing ended and the portables banged away in merry confusion. There were only two telephones on the train. There were inevitable arguments over the priority of the use of this limited communication system. There was bickering, sometimes bitter, sometimes good-natured. Agency men fought for maximum coverage, living as they did in constant fear of "rockets"—those blasts from the home office when a rival agency managed to score a beat. There were howls of rage and four-letter words in wild profusion.

AND there were long hours of frustration and boredom typical of anything that is military in character. But there was a lot of humor, as there would have to be with guys like Fred Sparks, Jim Pringle and Jim McNamara around.

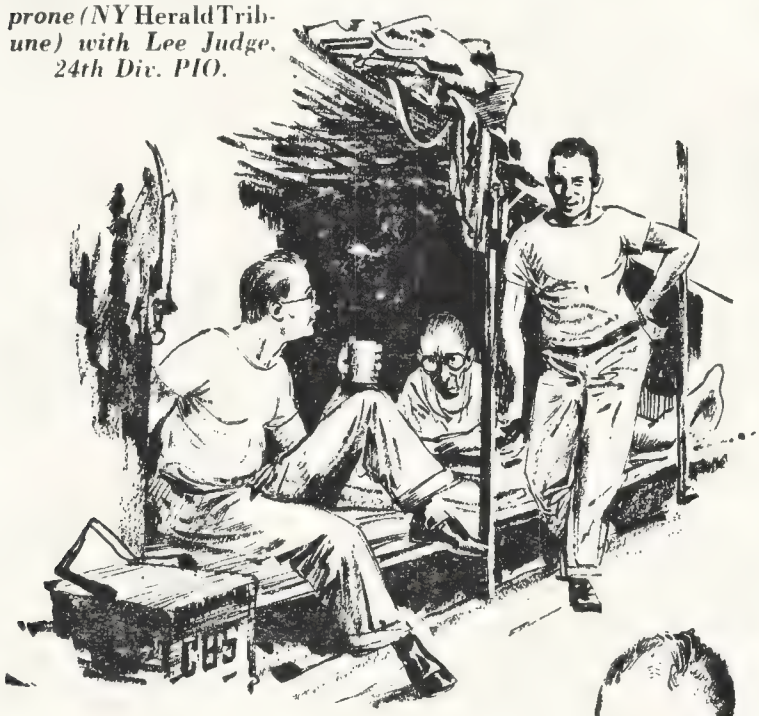
There was fine reporting too, from guys like Howard Handleman, INS Far East Bureau Chief, who came from Tokyo to ride out the talks. There were the competent old-timers like Bob Miller (UP) and Murray Schumach (NY *Times)* who always knew what they were doing; and there were also guys like me who almost never did. There were visiting dignitaries, VIPs and prima-donna specialists, and tough little camera-men who had had their cameras busted from Belgrade to Hawaii to God knows where.

And above all there were the weary, bored, hard-working agency men who sweated it out in teams between Seoul and Munsan, like Kalischer, Hoberecht and Hansen (UP), Brownlow, Dixon and Steinberg (INS), Summer-

(Text continues on page 23)

Getting the run-down from Bill Nuckols (seated on table) are "Bang-up" Lee (MGM News of the Day*) seated behind the General, and standing left to right, Howard Handleman (INS), Jim Healy (Acme), Keyes Beech (Chicago* News*), Hal Martin (*Satevepost*), Frank Bartholomew (UP) and Alfred Smoular (*Agence France Presse*). Seated opposite Nuckols are Wade Bingham (*Telenews*), rear view of our billeting sergeant, Bob Schutz (AP) and Don Dixon (INS). Back of head, foreground, is Mike Rougier (*Life*).*

(Below) Yakety-yak before sacking in. John Walters, seated (CBS) and Dave McConnell, prone (NY Herald Tribune*) with Lee Judge, 24th Div. PIO.*



BRIEFING:

THIS was high point of the day for most correspondents when Brigadier General Bill Nuckols came daily from conference table to the press train, to dictate daily communiqué and answer questions.

News-men would write their stories based on Nuckols' briefing, and from first-hand material gathered from trip to Kaesong; telephone their stories in for censorship and cabling.

Many more correspondents would crowd the communications car than could be shown in above sketch.

Early morning call.

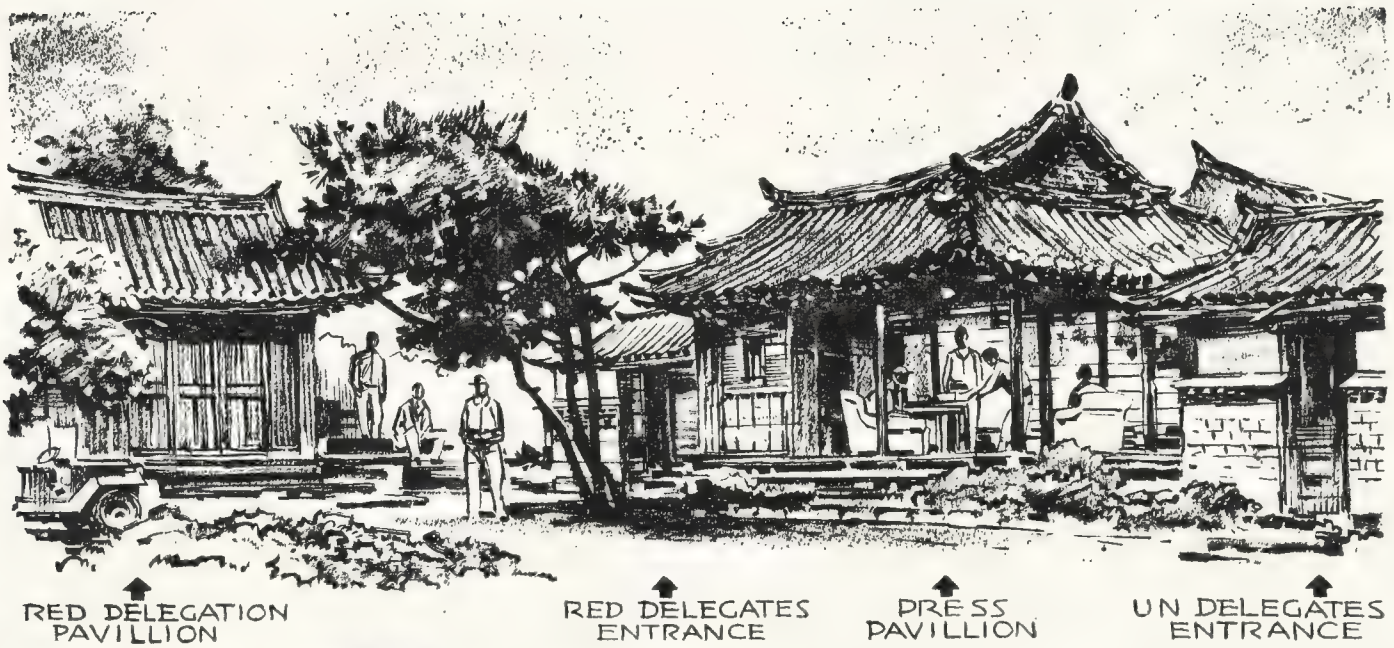
(Right) Major Jim McNamara, popular 8th Army PIO, makes up list of eligibles for morning run into Kaesong.

(Above) Before dawn, quota of news-men leave train by truck, are joined by kitchen and radio vehicles from near-by base camp. Convoy makes for the Imjin River, crosses into Communist territory and takes off for Kaesong.

Meanwhile, (right) UN delegates prepare to make the trip from base camp to conference site by helicopter.

Road to Kaesong runs through thirty miles of open country, dotted with farms, occasional clusters of thatched huts. We bought PX ration candy to toss to kids along the way. (Above) Reds warned villagers not to pick it up. Some were scared, but most (like kids the world over) took a chance and scrambled for it.

Entering Kaesong, we get first glimpse of our official enemy with North Korean MP holding traffic for our benefit, with one red flag, one white. At same spot daily, he got to know us, sometimes gave timid grin of welcome.



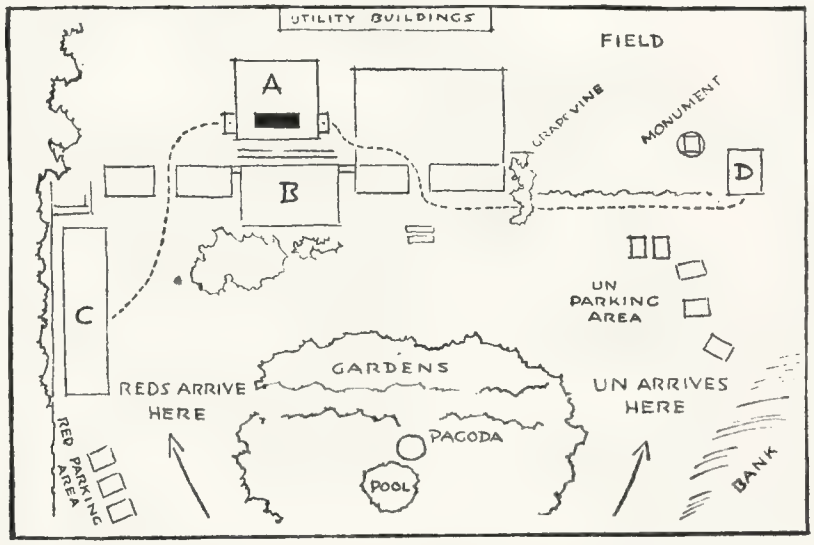
The Communist delegation arrives.

KAESONG

IT stood some distance from the center of town, approached by a winding driveway which circled on itself in front of some half-dozen one-storied buildings of Chinese design.

The gardens were overgrown, the pool stagnant, and grenades or mortars had torn an eave or loosened a wall in at least a dozen places. But the graceful roof lines of Oriental architecture were still intact. It was a pretty place, surrounded by trees and the everlasting backdrop of green-brown Korean hills. A place of grace, and of infinite tranquillity.

Miss Pak In-Suk, lieutenant interpreter, North Korean People's Army.



***Plan of Site**—(A) Main conference building; table shown in black. (B) Open Pavilion, where correspondents of both factions waited during the talks. (C) Red Delegation liaison pavilion where Red delegates prepared their papers. (D) UN Delegation liaison tent where UN delegates made last-minute plans for day's talk. Dotted lines show how delegates from both sides approached the armistice table from opposite ends, never forced to pass, intermingle or talk except actually at the table.*

TEAHOUSE

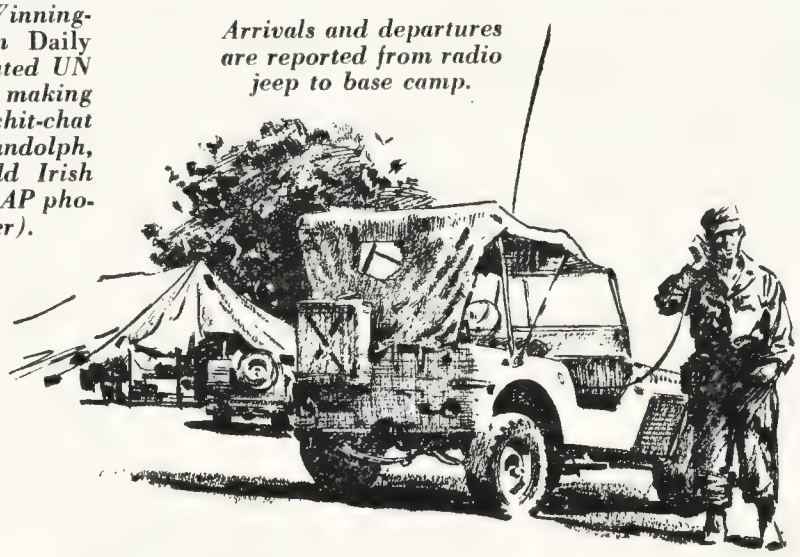
This was the site of the great effort. Here it was that the UN delegates, deposited by helicopter and brought in by jeep, waited in their tent while the Red delegation roared up in their own Russian-built jeeps in a furor of popping exhaust and squealing brakes. That was the moment for the news-men of both sides to seize their cameras and dash for points of vantage.

Here, daily, the respective delegations gathered up their papers and briefcases and from their liaison quarters at opposite sides of the compound, approached the central pavilion.

With Red contingent, arrive the two Communist British newsmen, (standing left to right) Wilfred Burchette, (Paris Le Soir*), and Alan Winnington, (London* Daily Worker*). Seated UN news-men making skeptical chit-chat are John Randolph, AP, and wild Irish Jim Pringle (AP photographer).*

Arriving UN delegate, Major General Paik Sun-Yup, commanding 1st ROK Army Corps.

Arrivals and departures are reported from radio jeep to base camp.



Communist delegation headed by Nam Il, leaves liaison pavilion for the teahouse gate.

NAM IL

YOU could never know what he was thinking of. He was a schoolteacher, a doctrinaire, and perhaps even a competent general. But who pulled the strings that made him function—that was a matter of conjecture. He always led the way to the gate that opened on the eastern approach to the conference room, accompanied by his aide in a stiff blue uniform. The other Communist delegates followed at a distance. And their thoughts, too, remained a question-mark.

Admiral Joy ducks the grapevine.

One by one, UN delegates go up miniature porch, enter the teahouse. Conference table is just inside the door.

ADMIRAL JOY

THERE was a grapevine entwined about a small lattice that arched over the path leading from the UN delegates' liaison tent and the central pavilion. A silly little hand pump stood across the path to the left. When Admiral C. Turner Joy first stooped his tall, angular frame to pass beneath the low-slung vine, the grapes themselves were small, hard and green. As the days shortened and the crisper days of fall approached, these grapes grew larger, reaching for maturity. Joy, his thoughts like Nam's inevitably his own, would approach the pavilion with grave dignity and duck beneath the vine. If he saw the grapes or took note of their growth through the days of waning summer, he gave no tangible sign.

Correspondents wait in open pavilion while talks progress in teahouse, beyond cement block wall. Pringle snaps quick shot of UN news-men trying to catch interpreter's voice, audible through the open windows. Red news-men, seated in chairs, take dim view of my sketching activity.

(Continued from page 17)
lin, Tuckman and Schutz (AP) and a whole host of others.

At meal-times they wandered into the mess-car, dropping forty cents of military scrip on the table by the door. If it was the evening meal, they picked up a ration pack of cigarettes from the same table, which may have been but a half or a third of what they found themselves using. The food was good. It usually is, in the army.

Briefing, coming late in the day, meant that most of the news work on the conference results was done in the evening. By the time the stories were filed over the wire, most of the guys had put in a fairly long day. And for those who would make the run to Kaesong, the morrow would begin well before dawn.

IF you were on the list which Jim McNamara would compile in the evening, in which he divided the coming day's quota between agency men, specials, photographers and networks, it behooved you to hit the sack in the hospital car at an early hour, and try to catch what slight amount of sleep the heat and the blacked-out windows would allow.

At five-thirty A. M. you would be aroused by the sergeant; you'd scratch your bites, shuffle to the lavatory cubicle at the end of the car and wash with more or less futility in a trickle of cold water. You'd grab early breakfast, assemble your gear and toss it in a waiting truck. In the half light of pre-dawn, you'd pull out for the base camp, where the motor convoy would be in the process of assembly for the thirty-mile run into the enemy lines.

No one making that bizarre hour-and-a-half trip would be likely soon to forget it. For it isn't every day that you can walk into your enemy's house—and walk out again with impunity.

FIRST landmark to encounter would be the Imjin River, technically our front line, although the enemy troops were tactfully not in evidence at the point of crossing. Here the convoy might or might not find for their convenience, a pontoon bridge built by the 84th Engineering Construction Battalion, which during much of the summer was forced to battle the rainy season's high water to keep it intact. Sometimes it was a losing battle, and the bridge would be out for days at a time. You might find yourself ferried across in assault boats, powered by outboards which would carefully skirt the overturned truck whose upthrust wheels were roiling the midstream current with whirlpools of frothy water.

Re-trucking on the opposite shore, the convoy would make its run for Kaesong in a flurry of sun-bright dust and flying gravel. Past scattered hovels with staring peasants—past other hovels shattered by gunfire. Past mud-choked rice paddies where patient workers toiled without ceasing, knee-deep in smelly paddy slime. And the kids! Noisy clouds of brown-bodied urchins who scampered in our wake like wind-blown leaves, to scramble and brawl for the handfuls of candy tossed from the correspondents' truck. This hail of sweets was our own idea. News-men can figure out an impromptu program of propagandizing the benefits of the democratic way of life, quite as well as some of our more authoritative Government channels.

YOUR eyes, stinging from wind and dust, would follow the road as it twisted and turned through field and farm; plunged down through river fords in the shadow of broken concrete arches that once had been bridges. You would wind between ditches where occasional rusty skeletons of trucks or tanks lay overturned to remind you that war had touched this road as even at the moment it was touching others. And you'd hope that today would be the day that the patient delegates would get on their horse, break the deadlock and wrap it up. But you wouldn't say much about that to the other guys.

You could see Kaesong from a distance. It sprawled its blue-gray rooftiles over a rolling hillside and out onto a valley floor three miles south of the 38th parallel. It had been an ancient walled city, but no remains of the wall were visible to the convoy which entered the city from the south along a deep-banked river. Here would be a hundred women who washed clothes and bathed and rode herd on a thousand children, splashing and screaming like all children—yours or mine—or anyone else's in the whole wide world on days of heat and high humidity.

You would gather a thousand colorful impressions. There was the Chinese MP with his white and red flags who never had any traffic to direct that we could see. There were the impassive townspeople and the plodding *"chike"* bearers, or A-Frame porters who carried such incredible loads on their bent backs. There were mutely staring women with loads on their heads, utterly emotionless; and in direct contrast to the uniformed North Korean guards whose belts carried no sidearms, but whose glances were freighted with a quality almost as lethal.

YES, it was quite a show. As I've said—full of color, but equally full of incongruity. For example, there was the building they called the UN house, where the main part of the motor convoy stopped, for it served as the mess camp for the UN delegation.

It was once the residence of a wealthy Korean, a high stucco structure surrounded by outbuildings, gardens and a shattered greenhouse. At the foot of a winding driveway stood the bathhouse, the center of which was recessed with a deep tiled declivity, the size of a small swimming pool. There was no water in it, of course. But what *was* in it, were the portable gasoline ranges of the kitchen detail, for this is where we would come to get our noonday meal, heaped on our plates by the mess sergeants.

Let me ask you—were you ever fed in a bathtub?

So this was Kaesong—a normal Oriental city of low houses, broad thoroughfares and narrow alleys—not unlike a hundred other Korean towns that have been somewhat beat up, but which still swarm with the activity of the living. There was a feeling about it, none-the-less. After all, it was held by the enemy, and you knew that every one of them in the whole city would rather you were dead than alive.

This was Kaesong—the neutral zone whose neutrality seemed always in question. Kaesong was the city of that hope that springs eternal. But in the summer of '51, it was the city of despair.

We never saw them at the table, of course, but we could hear them. We would crowd along the step that surrounded the open press pavilion, just inside the concrete wall that blocked off the conference room in the teahouse. The slow deliberate tones of the Admiral would be unmistakable, but it wasn't always possible to make out just what he was saying. Nam Il was unmistakable too, but even if we'd heard him clearly, it was beyond any of us to understand Korean. Then the interpreter would begin to translate in his high incisive voice, and phrases freighted with invective and bitter denunciation would hang in the sultry air with painful clarity.

"Your willful insistence in prolonging hostilities. . . ."

"Your arrogant assumption that. . . ."

"The criminal and brutal provocation of. . . ."

We could visualize the gathering under the unvarnished wood beams of the conference room: the long table, the Communist delegation sitting stiffly in uniform, facing the UN delegates in summer khaki. We could visualize the notes, pencils, ash-trays and the untouched tea pitcher on the green cloth that stretched between them—the little flags in their brass stands, the cigarette smoke, the busy stenographers seated at the tables to the rear.

We could sense the tension; could gauge the atmosphere of hostility, changing as it did to one of patience—then changing again to one of charged suspicion.

We all knew the enormous difficulties with which these men were faced. They were more than the normal barriers of language, ideology and military expediency. It was a deadlock of two utterly different approaches to basic logic. Thousands of years of differing culture had equipped these delegates with drastically dissimilar processes of thought and reason. What would seem to an American to be a simple matter of two plus two equals four, might engender a whole complex of rationalizations involving "face" and creeds and way of life, in the mind of a man whose thinking was characteristically oblique or intuitive.

Nothing was simple. The acknowledged fact that both sides no longer wanted their soldiery to suffer and perish in dismal horror, appallingly, made little difference. Other issues, more obscure yet equally realistic, would be the ultimate factor in decision.

So the talks would drone on, translated at length, and retranslated again. Each point took about forty-five minutes from its presentation to its inclusion in the record. One by one, the correspondents would tire of trying to listen, for by agreement we couldn't put this material to use, in any case. Jack Walters might try to pick up some of the mumbling talk with his tape recorder, but it would be only for his own amazement, not for broadcast.

The Commie correspondents would lounge in the shabby easy chairs in the open press pavilion and watch us with curiosity. One of them would stare at me sketching the scene and would ask to see the notebook. He'd look at my scribbles, then hold his nose, and make violent noises of contempt, and our guys would laugh and laugh, and so would I—a little. But after all— The damn fool!

THESE Commie news-men made little effort to mask their hostility. You could show them photographs of anything at all, but if they saw something detrimental to the Red propaganda line, they'd scowl and

sneer and maybe tear the photograph across and drop it on the ground. They never relaxed from the official Russian attitude for one moment. However, with the two British Communist correspondents, Burchette and Winnington, we held a somewhat different relationship.

You could talk to Alan Winnington, from the London Daily *Worker*, and perhaps discuss the relative merits of Milwaukee beer and Guinness stout, or compare notes on the business of portrait sketching in English pubs (which he did for a living once, and which I did for amusement many, many years ago). But the knowledge that people were dying, because of the difference between their ideology and ours, was bound to grip the mind and strain the attitude.

You'd say, "So long, Alan, see you over a barrel of beer," but feel constrained to add: "Or a rifle barrel."

Some of the Commies would move about the table in the press pavilion where we had piled our equipment and try to inspect it without too much overt curiosity. Their own cameras, usually the smaller candid types, were recognizably good machines with Jap lenses of known high quality.

There were several WAC sergeants among the Communist group who wore coarse brown tunics with stiff shoulder boards colored by insignia stripes and red stars. Most wore skirts, brown or blue, and no stockings. Some wore stiff Russian boots instead of the usual tennis shoes. They were young, invariably, but they were sullen babes—and wouldn't raise a whistle in any army that I knew of.

We wandered through the gardens and tried to figure out the species of plants which were always nearly like something we have in the States—only different. We'd prop ourselves in the little summer house by the pool covered with thick green algæ, and watch the Commie photographers smoking nervously from their bright vermilion packs of cigarettes. I smoked one once—it wasn't bad.

And beyond the wall in the stuffy teahouse, the talks went on—now animated, now sullen, and occasionally interrupted by long heavy silences. At such times the sudden twanging of the "*mami*," a huge locust with a call like the rapid plucking of a taut rubber band, would shatter the still air enough to make you jump.

Then suddenly we would detect a new note in the character of the talk. There would be a shuffle of papers and the scrape of chairs. News-men would break into a flurry of activity, and you knew the talks were being recessed for the day. You could dash to a commanding position at one end of the compound or the other, to watch either our delegates or theirs emerge from their respective gateways. The officer by the radio jeep, microphone in hand, would begin his loud mechanical calls.

"Banter, this is Hayworth one, over. Banter this is Hayworth one. The delegates are leaving the pavilion now. Do you hear me loud and clear? Repeat, the delegates are leaving the pavilion now."

The flashbulbs would pop. The cameras would be wound and triggered, rewound and triggered again.

Then the jeeps, both UN and Red, would load their personnel and roar into life. The news-men would pile in the trucks. The tires would squeal; the gravel would fly; and in a very few minutes, the whole compound would be empty of life, left to the bored contemplation of a drowsy guard, the beat of the summer sun and the twanging *mami*. One more fruitless peace session would pass into the record for posterity to ponder over with puzzled speculation—and frustration. . . .

Back at the train, the news-men swore and sweated, wrote and drank, gambled and read and wrote some more.

The summer dragged on. The talks were delayed, were resumed, were postponed and resumed again. The news-men came and went. But bored or excited, they did their job. They'd make a quick run back to the press billets in Seoul for a shower, clean clothes and a drink with ice at the Fifth Air Force bar. But the big story was always in Kaesong, and the main job remained where it had been from the beginning—on the train, the "Nowhere Express" which perpetually hissed its plume of steam into the air above Munsan-ni.

And down at the base camp there were worried men and tired men who worked under naked bulbs far into the night, compiling notes, sifting data and preparing their program of persuasion with thought and care—and hope. They were good men, conscientious and hard working to a degree. Like the restless train crew in the station yard, they wanted desperately to open the throttle, engage the big drivers and move out on the high iron. Like the train crew who worked and waited, they too worked and waited. The steam was always at hand, but somehow it was never applied.

That was the story of the incredible trip of the "Nowhere Express." In terms of effort and companionship it was a wonderful trip indeed—except for its tragic and inevitable destination.

A good trip, yes. But a trip to nowhere—as yet. —The End

A Gentleman's War

BY DAVID CLARK

It was mid-afternoon of the first day's battle at Gettysburg when General John B. Gordon, at the head of his Georgia brigade, swept across Rock Creek to envelop the Union right flank. Through the flickering smoke haze, he saw a Union officer shot from his horse.

Gordon wheeled his black stallion over to the fallen enemy leader. He dismounted to find the Union officer—General Francis Barlow of New York—paralyzed by a Minié ball which had struck his spine. Gordon placed his own canteen to the wounded man's lips, then had two litter bearers carry him to a clump of trees out of the burning sun. Barlow whispered to Gordon to take a packet of Mrs. Barlow's letters from his pocket and destroy them—and to tell Mrs. Barlow, should Gordan ever meet her, that her husband had died thinking of her.

After darkness had closed the day's battle, Gordon learned that Mrs. Barlow was staying in Gettysburg. Under a flag of truce, he sent the packet of letters to her, told her of her husband's fate, and had her escorted through the Confederate lines to the wounded officer. Finding Barlow still conscious, Gordon helped Mrs. Barlow remove him to a nearby house.

Following the war's end, Gordon returned to his native Georgia and entered politics. In a few years he was elected to the United States Senate, and while serving his second term in Washington, attended a dinner given political notables by Clarkson Potter. Seated next to a guest whom Potter had introduced as General Barlow, Gordon's mind faded back fifteen years to the field of Gettysburg. He asked his neighbor whether he was related to the General Barlow who had been killed at Gettysburg.

Barlow smiled as he answered: "I am the one. And," he asked, having long since confused his rescuer with General J. B. Gordon of North Carolina, killed during the war, "are you related to the General Gordon who killed me?"

"Why, sir, I am that man," laughed Gordon.

Thus began a friendship which was cherished until Barlow's death in 1896. Though neither man had been a professional soldier, both had risen through the ranks to become major-generals. After the war, both men achieved political prominence in their native states, Gordon eventually becoming governor of Georgia, and Barlow attorney-general of New York.

The Wolf,

YOU worry for me, my friends? You fear because I go to town? There is no need for care. I am Vasco Blas, owner of sheep. Out of our Nevada mountains I go. To our summits I return. While down in Inyoville this time, it is true, I am a little bit drunk. But not so drunk that I do not find with ease the doorway to the Pamplona Hotel. Not so drunk that I do not behold the wide backside of Ed Jessup where he leans over the counter.

This Jessup speaks in low voice to Teresa Pamplona, my betrothed, who sits behind the cash drawer. Though his back is to me, the red mustaches of Ed Jessup stick out at the sides of his face.

I go up to this Jessup, whom I despise; he is but a merchant. I tap his shoulder. When I tap a man with my finger, it is as the knock of a falling oak. Ed Jessup whirls. The wart on his nose leaps about in desire for battle. But when he sees it is I, he is at once all smiles. The wart dances with pleasure. Why not? I owe him money, and he knows I always pay the interest.

"Ah, Vasco! You are in town! You come for supplies; for more furniture for the fine new house; perhaps for a piano. You celebrate something. Is it for victory over El Diablo, the terrible wolf? Let us go into the bar and clink cups, Vasco Blas my great friend!"

"Not so great a friend, Ed Jessup," I rebuke with sternness, "if you hang over the hotel counter like this while I am away. Teresa cannot see through you to know who comes and goes. The guest arrives with trunk in arms, and she does not observe. He leaves with the mattress and all blankets, and she does not perceive. Out of my way, for I would receive from my beautiful one the rightful welcome. . . . Ah, Teresa! It is I, Vasco the owner of many sheep, your husband-to-be!"

With scream of joy, jump to the feet and kiss more heady than any wine, my friends, Teresa Pamplona greets me. Ah, Teresa is superb. She is tall. She dangles the rich curls from many combs and pins. She has the goddess figure. Her girdle pours out the curves at the top like a pitcher. She is one, two, three years older than I, who am twenty-one, but what matter? The man of the pair is always the wise one. "Oh, Vasco," she raptures, in velvet voice, "we were talking about you. It is a whole month, my heart, that you have been away in your mountains. Ed Jessup and I were asking each other: 'Has Vasco Blas wrought death at last to El Diablo the wolf of wolves, or has El Diablo chased Vasco up a tree and slain all his sheep?'"

"Poof! That wolf!" I dismiss with scorn, though I do not feel such loftiness. I feel the pain of a stab, the ache of a blow. "The cowardly thief is no more. . . . Teresa, I would trim the beard. I would wash the face. I

She Howl

The surprising saga of Vasco Blas, owner of sheep in Nevada; of his sweetheart, his rival, his new house—and of the great wolf whose dramatic demise wrought such a change in Vasco's fortunes.

by NEILL WILSON

would comb the hair. Then I would dine, having for long eaten only the frightful cookery of Tomás and Marcial my herders. The tasty codfish, the *bacalao;* the spiced meatball with egg, the *albóndiga;* these would I consume, happy that they are not the pot work of two shearers, but of Mother Pamplona herself."

"Why, so it shall be, choice of my soul," croons glorious Teresa, giving me the adoring eye. And why not? Am I not Basque, of the mountaineers from sunny Spain who know all there is to know about sheep—and women?

"The wash-basin," reminds Teresa, "is in back, on its usual bench. See that you turn it upside down this time when you are done. The comb is on its chain. I will order my sister Nisca to bring you scissors and plenty of hot water."

"When I am ready to eat, Teresa, will you come into the dining-room, leaving this Ed Jessup to his own company? Will you sit beside me from soup to pudding? We have much to tell each other in the soft whisper, the roll of eye, the press of knee. For a month I have heard almost nothing but the yip-yap of Marcial and Tomás, the bang of hammers, and the bawling of four thousand foolish sheep."

"We shall sit as close as this, Vasco lover." She holds two fingers and looks arch. Ed Jessup sucks in his breath till his mustaches flutter.

I REACH over the counter for the hug that lifts her from her feet. I put her down and go to the back of the hotel, where Nisca comes with a can of water and her own small scissors. Nisca's dark hair is in two pigtails. She is of years about sixteen. She is to Teresa as the silvery sardine is to the fine proud salmon.

Nisca is nervous. I am glad she does not offer to trim the beard, for surely she would snip the chin, perhaps the ear. She sets down the can of water as if it burns. Then she runs. I find that the water is warm, but not hot. "What," I wonder, "is the matter with Nisca? Are the lessons of the books in high school too much for her eager young brain?"

I trim the beard myself. Though great and black, it is soft as a lamb's belly, for in all my twenty-one years it has not been shorn. I wash the face. I comb the hair. I do not care for this comb too much, for I do not know how many times Ed Jessup's red mustache passes through it. I dump the tin basin upside down as Teresa requires, and follow my nose to the dining-room. Nisca brings on the soup in the large bowl. To my surprise her legs, which were bare, are now in stockings, and the shoes have high heels. She is shy. She spills a little of the soup. I do not know why it should be, but I think her heart pumps fast for something.

"Are you stirred up because Ed Jessup hangs around the counter, anxious Nisca?" I ask. "There is no cause for family worry. Teresa loathes this flirt. He is nothing but a lot of money and a pair of mustaches."

"No, I am not stirred up by Ed Jessup," she replies.

"He too freely chucks the chin or nips the hip, perhaps, of one who passes?"

"He'd better not. My mother's kitchen has many knives."

"Ha, little Nisca," I tease, pinching her cheeks, "this goose-skin of the arms, this heave and fall of bosom, are they because some suitable young man, who should be praying, peeps at you in church?"

"It is my own business what I am jangled about," she states, striking away my hands, and she runs for the kitchen.

I ladle myself some soup, which is from a caldron that has not been cold in twelve years. Mother Pamplona is of our race from Spain that knows all there is to know about soup. Always she sees that as much goes back into the kettle as comes out.

Teresa moves into the dining-room to join me. Ah, she is elegance and swish! She throws sweet pollen up to her face from a little box. I, man of sagebrush and wind, am made weak by this Venus-scent. "Queen of my life!" I spring up. I pull a chair near. She sits down. Her eyes are golden brown. They melt, they swim, like butter on hotcakes.

She pats my hand. "Now, Vasco, the news."

"About the sheep? The fattening, thick-wooled sheep?"

"No, Vasco, it is not about these I wish to hear."

"About the rains, then? The early rains, starting new grass?"

"Don't be silly, Vasco. I care nothing about the grass."

I groan. "It is El Diablo you would hear about."

"All in good time. I was sure no wolf could stand against you for always, Vasco. Not even El Diablo. The story of his end I shall relish when we come to it. Right now, what I want is the latest word about our house."

"Oh. The house." That house.

"The work upon it is done, Vasco keeper of my heart?" She puts her smooth cheek against mine. The black beard tickles both of us. Ah, Tomás and Marcial, my *pobrecitos,* my scraggle-faced comrades, he is a man, who can own such a beard as well as leagues of land and four thousand sheep!

"OUR house is finally finished?" she insists on knowing.

"Yes, Teresa, it is finished." Two years I am building this house for my loved one, as you, Marcial and Tomás, well and soundly know. Honestly we build it, to the last stone and board.

I place my arm about Teresa's waist. I think: this resolute girdle, how much longer must it be between us, like a wall?

With my other arm I dip soup.

She folds both hands over mine. She snuggles. "Dear Vasco! So hard you work for me with saw and hammer and chisel, though I know you would rather sit and watch the small lambs prance and their mothers chew grass. But now the house is finished. I want to hear about every chip and nail!"

"Well," I sigh, for of a truth the hammer and saw are heavy, "it is a very strong house." How well, Marcial and Tomás, we know this is so!

Illustrated by CARL BURGER

"Tomás, stand ready with the gun if he comes for us. Adiós. Diablo!"

"Stone, the first story, all the way around?" Her eyes shine.

"Stone, the first story."

"With a wide door for the cow that shall give us cream?"

"With a door that is as wide as a cow, though I am not a man who loves a cow."

"Timbers above the first story, as in the old country which my mother tells about? Roof sloping down in back, almost to the ground, to give shelter for our creatures and storage for hay? In the front, wide balcony? Carved eaves?"

"All as you plan them." With what care did Teresa draw the sketch!

"One enters a court, a patio? One takes carved stair to the rooms above, which are four?"

"Exactly so." My arm is sore from so much hammering.

"Thoughtful Vasco." She sighs for happiness. "Now I can begin to pack my chests."

Nisca bears away the soup bowl.

Teresa counts with the fingers against the back of my hand. "Twenty-four mules, I think, or maybe thirty, will be required to carry these chests, the bed, the electric range, the television set, and all else needed for this house."

"Teresa, a surprise for you," I inform. "On my last trip to town, I buy and take away much furniture. Ed Jessup shows me how to add a few more words to the mortgage. On mules hired from Jessup go the great bed, the rugs, the electric range and the television set. Let us worry the pretty head no further about the things which are needed for this house."

"Vasco, you are truly a king of providers!" sobs Teresa in delight. "But of oak chests now to be packed, they are twelve, and they will be heavy, so we shall still require one dozen very strong pack-mules. And a gentle riding mule for me."

"Now twelve chests, Teresa, are a good many. I have hoped there would be but one. And, since you are of Basque blood, I have hoped you would walk. Let us speak no more at this time, my treasure, about mules. They are costly to hire, and they sweat and balk and kick up dust. Let us speak instead of the scented sagebrush, of the sunlight and starlight and moonlight on Nevada's mountains. Let us speak of love."

"Still, Vasco, those chests are important, and you are crazy if you think I'll walk."

Nisca brings in the meatballs. I observe that her hair has been lifted to the top of her head. Teresa also sees this.

"You have been at my hairpins, child," she chides with sharpness. "It is not necessary for one to prink who only brings and takes the dishes. . . . You were saying, Vasco mine?"

I find myself sweaty, even as the overladen mule. But it is with excitement. For, Marcial and Tomás, do I not have a story? "Let me tell you, Teresa, about how I capture El Diablo the wolf."

"Ah, the wolf! I am so proud of you, my brave one! But another subject first: let's set our wedding day."

My heart jumps. I am most pleased to set time for our wedding. "It shall be today, Teresa. Within the hour. I am of great desire to get back to the rancho, which has only Marcial and Tomás. These are honest men, but small-brained as the rabbit."

"But the wedding cannot be for a week, Vasco lover, though my soul sings to hear you so eager. There are the gifts to collect. The fitting of the gown. The dressing of the hair. There is also the fiesta. Even my pullet-sized sister looks forward to the fiesta, don't you, Nisca?"

Nisca has brought the *bacalao*. She has been crying.

I ask: "Why do you cry, Nisca? Is it the pepper in the codfish?"

Teresa puts in: "It is not of the least importance, Vasco, why the infant cries. Always they cry when they are but sixteen. She has trouble with her geometry. Also, she wishes to run away from home and be a car hop. Let us fret no more of why a schoolgirl cries, but put our minds to our wedding."

"It must be today, Teresa," I tell her frankly. "I must get back to my sheep."

"Oh, those confounded sheep!" Teresa is provoked. "One would think El Diablo is still at large. You did slay him, didn't you?"

"Yes, Teresa, I slew him."

"Then I am comforted. Ed Jessup has tried many times to frighten me about El Diablo."

"What does this ape of a man, this dog, this whelp of a coyote, tell you of El Diablo, Teresa?"

"He warns there never was such a wolf for size, for fierceness. Or one so cruel, so sly, so hard to catch. He tells me all that you have told him, Vasco: how this thief, this murderer, steals the lambs and slashes the throats of the mother ewes. So—and so—and so." She shows with her own white teeth how El Diablo slashes. "Ed was saying over the hotel counter, only today, that I should not live on a rancho if I do not like wolves."

"Now this Ed Jessup," I holler, leaping and upsetting the *bacalao*, "him shall I have the hide of!"

"The way you have the hide of El Diablo, Vasco?"

"I do not have the hide of El Diablo."

She looks at me for long. Her eyes go to slits. "But, Vasco, if you do not have the hide, how can I be sure you have the wolf?"

"I, Vasco Blas, have the wolf." I swell the chest.

She clutches my arm. "Sit, Vasco. Since I am to be a sheepman's wife, I must know all about these matters. Tell how you stalk this monster—how you deal with him."

Nisca also draws near.

"Well, as you know, Teresa," I say with thump of breast, "this wolf, which I kill, is the grandfather of all wolves. The most cunning and kill-crazy. It is he that makes the building of our house take long."

"Two full years, my friend."

"When I and Marcial and Tomás roll stones for the house, we carry our guns. This makes difficulty; they get between our legs. When we climb the ladder, our rifles are on our backs. This makes more trouble; sometimes they hit our heads. The wolf watches from the nearest hill. He barks. He howls. He jeers. I throw down the timber I carry; I point the gun. I shoot. He dodges. I think I have run him off. He but kills another sheep. I chase him. I shoot again. I go back to work on the house. He kills a beautiful brave dog. I curse. I weep. I bury the dog. El Diablo comes back at night and sits howling on the grave.

"And the ewes die, and the dogs die. And at poison, El Diablo laughs. At a trap he sniffs and walks wide. Teresa, day and night I think of nothing but this wolf."

"Go on, Vasco. Like you, I hate this wolf."

My friends, I tell the girls how I come to town last month. How I go to the church and light candles to Saint Silvestre. "Patron of sheepmen, help me," I pray. And I go to the store of Ed Jessup to buy more poison as well as the furniture. Of this visit to the store I also tell the girls.

I tell how Ed Jessup shakes his head. "Vasco Blas, you are of the race from Spain that practically invented sheep. Yet you do not polish off this wolf. You would marry the beautiful Teresa Pamplona and take her to your rancho where dogs and even men are not safe. For your war upon this wolf you buy only one more foolish can of poison."

"I have built for Teresa a strong two-story house," I point out.

"Teresa cannot stay upstairs in a house all her life. We must make end of this wolf. By great good fortune for you, Vasco, I am from Maine, where we happen to know all that is to be known about wolves."

"And what, Ed Jessup, would you advise? I have tried poison, gun and trap."

"Vasco, I would set out ten traps, all in one place. No wolf can step that wide."

Friends Marcial and Tomás, as I told the sisters then, so I tell you now: when Ed Jessup advises this, it is in order to sell more traps. But the man from Maine has a good idea. "Ed Jessup," I cry, "Saint Silvestre indeed has heard me. Add to my purchases not ten steel traps, but twenty, and let them be No. 5's, the size with teeth and chains suitable for bears. We shall see if El Diablo now can get away."

"Spoken like a man of purpose, Vasco!" admires Ed Jessup. "Sow them closely, without scent, and you will have him." He looks at me who buys such fine furniture for Teresa Pamplona and soon will marry her. He asks, "How, Vasco, will you then dispatch El Diablo after you trap him?"

"With bullet and knife!" I crow.

But Jessup again shakes his head. "You Basques are a soft people. It is not as we do in Maine. I remember how my grandfather— But no, you would not have the courage. You are of another race."

"What is this courage that is only in Maine?" I yelp.

"My grandfather caught a notable wolf, but he refused to hurry him from life with a rifle pop. That wolf died with a clap of thunder." Jessup stands lost in memory. "It was sensational."

"How was this done?"

"With dynamite. With two sticks, tied to the tail."

It is an idea of utmost grandeur. "But," I inquire, "why to the tail? Why not just toss the sticks under the wolf while he stands snarling and gnashing in the traps?"

"Because, Vasco, a man from Maine does not like to lose his traps. They cost money. And because he likes to celebrate the colossal victory. Also, he is fair. He is just. He turns his enemy loose to scoot for freedom. The fleeing wolf takes his doom with him. It splutters along behind."

Ed Jessup smiles, my friends. His mustaches stir like a cat's over a piece of fish. His merchant eyes are crafty. And, I tell Teresa and her sister, I know why. It is because he thinks I, Vasco Blas, am afraid to walk among my own traps and grasp El Diablo by the tail.

"But my grandfather," murmurs Jessup, "was a brave one. He was a true man from Maine."

I hoot loudly. "Of this scheme, Ed Jessup, I have nothing but praise. But the two sticks of dynamite prove to me that your so-bold grandfather dealt with only a little wolf. I shall tie four sticks to the tail of El Diablo. . . . Four? Let us make it a real set of candles to Saint Silvestre. I'll tie six sticks!"

Jessup is of a tremble. "You will do this?" he gasps.

I laugh greatly. I snap the fingers. "Hand me the traps, the dynamite, the caps, the fuse. I don't know where Maine is, but this shall be a boom your own grandfather will hear." Jessup puts the things in some sacks. I rent from him another pack mule, and with this and the mules bearing furniture I set out for the hills.

These matters, my friends, I tell Teresa and her sister, as I pause to eat a spiced meatball with egg.

"And the scheme works, Vasco?" Teresa begs to know. Nisca holds her breath.

I inform the two sisters: "My children, it works. I reach the rancho. On a mule I go to the grave of my best dog, and upon it I throw a fresh sheep's hide. Upon this hide I dismount. Of me the ground shall have no scent. The traps I handle with boiled gloves. Carefully I remind myself where traps are placed. I leap to the mule, reach down and drag hide back and forth over the buried traps, and ride away. I have but to wait."

"You wait long?" Teresa and Nisca both ask it.

"One month, lacking a few days. In this time, I lose many more sheep. I work, Teresa, on our house. I nail the last boards on the roof. Marcial comes up the ladder as if on the horns of a bull. 'El Diablo is caught!' he yells. 'Vasco, you can hear him howl!'

"I throw away the hammer," I tell the girls. "I listen. Marcial is pale. I am pale too, but it is with triumph. To Marcial I say: 'Fetch the sheep's hide and a rope. And find Tomás. Bid him hold the gun at readiness,

but he is not to shoot unless to save me.' Marcial goes to the hut of boards and black paper where we three men live, and pulls Tomás from under the straw. They bring gun and sheepskin. I pluck the dynamite from the squirrel hole where I cache it.

"We advance to the wolf. By two legs he has trapped himself. Oh, he is the king of wolves, the father of all evil! He is one hundred and fifty pounds of twisting fury. He screams. He snaps. His lips curl above the savage teeth. His eyes are two yellow coals. They burn with rage, with hate. But I, Vasco Blas, go forward. Over the tall black ears, the long nose, the sharp cruel jaws I throw my skin of a sheep. I have his head in a hood. I make it tight with the rope. I laugh; I am safe from the jaws. So I grasp the tail. Even this tail is full of fight and fury. But my knees have held many a ram at the shearing, and they are strong. I hold the struggling tail. I tie Saint Silvestre's candles to it, all six sticks. I light the fuse.

"'Release the foreleg, Marcial. Now the hind! Tomás, stand ready with the gun if he comes for us.' I yank off the hood. '*Adios,* Diablo!' We spring aside."

Teresa asks, eyes big with joy: "How far does El Diablo scoot?"

"Not far. He runs under the house."

"The new house?"

I am silent.

"So this," says Teresa at last, "is what you mean when you say our house is finished?"

I am silent. Nisca is very silent.

"And the lovely furniture? The rugs, the electric range, the television set—they are in small bits all over Nevada?"

"And Utah, I think," I have to tell her, "and perhaps a part of Maine. But, Teresa, we have each other. And there is still the hut. It is snug and dry."

"A sheepherders' hut," remarks Teresa.

"So you perceive, my beloved, why one chest will be enough. In five years, in ten, when I am out of debt—"

"Ten years!" She stares at me. Do you know, friends Marcial and Tomás, what I see when she glares like this? Yellow eyes that burn with rage! They are exactly as the eyes of El Diablo when he was caught in the traps! I am looking into the eyes of a furious she-wolf. And like the trapped wolf, she howls. "Ed! Ed Jessup! Come here and save me!"

"What wickedness threatens the charming Teresa Pamplona?" demands Ed Jessup, striding in from the lobby.

"This fool—this sheepman—would drag me off to a hut! Do I, who am used to a whole hotel, look like one who would live ten years in a one-room hut?"

"It is not necessary, Teresa." Jessup's mustaches wave as a dog's tail when he beholds his plate of dinner. "My fair one, I should have told the idiot that the exact same thing happened to my grandfather. Never mind—I have Vasco's deed of trust, at eight per cent. . . . It has long been in my mind, Teresa, to buy this hotel. Your mother shall continue to run it. You and I can set up nicely in the bridal suite."

He observes the yellow coals that are her eyes; they are a wolf's as it moves on a lamb. He sees the white teeth as the lean hard cheeks go back in a smile. He draws away. It is too late. She leaps.

"Why, she is yours, Ed Jessup," I shout as her arms go about him. I laugh. I roar. "My friend, along with your eight per cent, I give you La Diabla. By the fangs, when the lip curls back, she is much more than three-and-twenty, but she will do you many years. Saint Silvestre, guardian of sheepmen, mine is an escape! . . . Now I would finish my dinner. The pudding, Nisca child."

Nisca fetches the pudding and runs out. Always, it seems, she is on the run.

She returns. "Nisca," I exclaim, "where are you going?" She has changed her clothes.

She does not answer.

I regard her pretty face. I find myself aware that her healthy young form does not need more geometry. "You are off to be a car hop?"

She looks at me.

"But your shoes are much too heavy for a car hop's. Your dress is too coarse." Still she looks at me. These are not a she-wolf's eyes. These are stars.

I put my head back. Once more I shout for happiness. I open wide my arms. "Child, how you grow up!"

"Let us start, Vasco. The Father awaits us at the church. I ran and told him I thought that we were coming."

"When we reach the rancho, Nisca, I will toss Marcial and Tomás from the hut. They shall have the hole in the ground."

"They shall sleep in the great hole, Vasco, but—*pobrecitos!*—they shall eat with us. I am used to living in a hotel."

Once more I shout for happiness. "Child, how you grow up!"

Our Arctic Pioneer

A century ago Elisha Kane's book "Arctic Explorations" held the place of honor beside the Bible on American parlor tables. And his funeral called forth national mourning only exceeded by that of Lincoln.

by DAVID HAWKE

(Continued from second cover)

WHILE the sales of Kane's "Arctic Explorations" skyrocketed, the press did its best to unearth details about the author—a reluctant subject when it came to talking about himself. Reporters exhausted their stock of laudatory adjectives attempting to describe the quiet, modest, charming and handsome explorer. Kane's foibles they forgot. Nothing was said in print, for instance, that he was subject to moods of abject despondency which often bordered on insanity. Once, in the Arctic, he emptied his revolver at a crew member whom he swore, in the face of evidence to the contrary, was deserting the expedition. Nor was there any mention in the press, until years after his death, that Kane was carrying on an affair with one of the most beautiful women of the day—the young spiritualist Margaret Fox.

Kane's Arctic escapades, reporters soon learned, were only the latest in a life spent globe-trotting in search of excitement. As one journalist of the day remarked: "The fantastic adventures of Baron Munchausen fade to dullness alongside those of our Dr. Kane." In Kane's brief, blustery, hurricane of an existence there was no dead-center calm until the end.

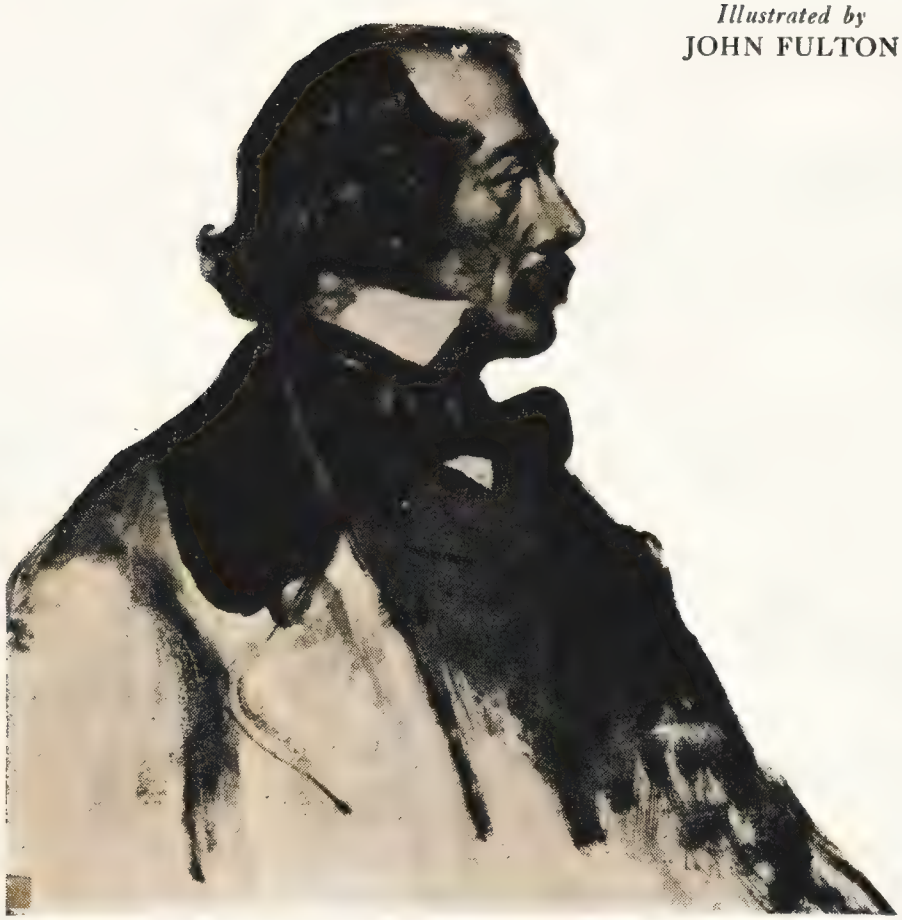
Even his childhood lacked placidity. Kane's worshipful biographer sums up the youngster's personality in a typically Victorian manner: "He earned the character of a bad boy, while he was, in fact, exercising and cultivating the spirit of a brave one."

Young Elisha was the scion of one of Philadelphia's most eminent lawyers. Though he showed little love for learning, there appeared small chance he could evade a professional career. Sons, in those days, rarely failed to follow in their father's steps, or in a similarly suitable pursuit. If any hope of a carefree life lingered in Kane, it was completely extinguished when he was carried home from the University of Virginia on a stretcher, a victim of rheumatism and a bad heart. "Doctors tell me," he wrote a friend, "I may live a month, or perhaps a half year; but they know, and I know, that I may be struck down in a half-hour."

Resigned to death at eighteen, Kane moped about home for several months. Bored by books, ordered by doctors to shun excitement and strenuous activity, he lived on a diet of apathy compounded with tedium. Finally Elisha's father, exhibiting wisdom that later came to make him one of Philadelphia's most distinguished judges, could stand the sight of his listless son no longer. "Elisha," he blurted out one day, "if you must die, die in the harness."

JUDGE KANE'S words apparently became a credo for his son. Not long thereafter he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania, and in record time he pushed through to a degree

Illustrated by
JOHN FULTON



Flags throughout the land were lowered to half-mast at his death.

and an M.D. Next he charmed his way past the stiff physical requirements and into the Navy. From that day on, Dr. Elisha Kent Kane courted danger with almost pathological persistence, as though some sublimated devil forced him on to ever greater risks. He once told a friend he was determined to make his mark in the world. He did just that; but for the son of a Philadelphia blueblood he chose an eccentric route to eminence.

Though the Navy had passed and accepted Kane as an officer, there were at the moment no billets open for assistant surgeons. Rather than loll around waiting to be called to active duty, he pulled strings which produced an appointment as physician to a mission under Caleb Cushing, destined to negotiate a treaty with China. Aboard the frigate *Brandywine*, Kane left for the Far East in 1843, not to return to the United States until four years later. Although this hegira was only a prelude to the Arctic, the adventures that fell to Kane were far more than are allotted to most men in a lifetime.

Travel being leisurely in those days, there were several stops on the journey of nearly a year to China. In Rio de Janeiro Kane witnessed the coronation of the Empress of Brazil. In India, to which he later returned to climb the Himalayas, he explored the rarely visited temples at Karli, and ranged over the Western Ghat Mountains. When the ship paused at Ceylon, Kane struck out for the hinterland, visited the island's capital—"a large straggling village echoing continually with the cries of birds and wild beasts"—and shared in the thrill of an elephant hunt. He was probably one of the first Americans to enjoy this sport of the East.

Once in China, Kane was quickly bored by the round of parties which were so much a part of the diplomatic negotiations. With Mr. Cushing's permission, he set out in search of adventure. He sailed for the island of Luzon in the Philippines. It was on Luzon that Kane's curiosity—and not, for a change, disease—nearly proved to be his undoing. The episode occurred in the company of a Baron Loë, relative to Prince Metternich, during what commenced as an innocent sight-seeing tour around the rim of an active volcano. Kane thought it would be "interesting" to investigate the interior of the volcano's bubbling crater. The Baron sensibly demurred. In spite of protests from other members of the party, Kane had himself lowered by a rope of twisted strands of bamboo over the brink to the floor of the crater some two hundred feet below.

Detaching himself from the rope, he scrambled around the smoking interior. Probably less in the interest of science and more to cloak his lark with dignity, he carefully dipped specimen bottles full of bubbling lava, then headed back for his rope. The short trek to the dangling rope proved more of a feat than bargained for. He slipped amid the scalding ashes that gave way under him; his boots were charred from his feet; and hardly had he knotted the life-line around his waist than he passed out from the stifling fumes.

After Kane had been pulled out of the crater and revived from his ordeal, the natives, who up to now had been the Doctor's accommodating guides, produced another ticklish situation. The volcano was one of their gods. Infuriated and frightened that Kane should have trespassed on sacred ground, they insisted he should die for his deed. It took a group of mediating padres to rescue the inquisitive physician and his companions from this predicament.

With the knowledge that he had been the first American to explore the length and breadth of Luzon, Kane returned to China. He found that the mission under Cushing was preparing to leave for home. Intrigued with the Far East, and with no reason to hurry back since he was still on the Navy's inactive list, Kane decided to remain in Canton as physician to British residents there. A bout with rice fever soon put an end to these plans. Reluctantly he realized that Canton's oppressive climate would never allow him to recuperate. In 1845 he set sail for home, picking up as a traveling companion in India a Prince Tagore, "one of the wealthiest native nobles in Calcutta." The Prince was headed for England to pay Queen Victoria a visit, but Kane parted company with him in Egypt, where he again managed to get entangled in troubles.

At first the Egyptian sojourn was relatively peaceful. Crossing the great Nubian Desert to Aby Hamed, he outfitted himself with a small boat and sailed leisurely up the Blue Nile, as a one-man archeological expedition. Later he returned to "rest" at Thebes and the Temple of Karnak. "My life at Thebes," he wrote, "is a wild one. I am in native dress, with a beard so long I have to tuck it in. My lodging is the hot ground, and I walk on the average twenty-six miles a day."

Suddenly the quiet existence ended. Disaster, which seemed always to hover near Kane, struck a four-way blow. He awoke one morning to find his boat pilfered of all papers and equip-

ment. A few days later, to use his biographer's succinct statement of the facts, "he was wounded by a party of Bedouins who attempted to rob him again." To dodge the light-fingered natives and to recuperate from the wound, Kane headed for the peace and protection of Alexandria. Hardly had he reached the city when he was visited by the plague. Then as a final blow, while recovering from all this, the valuable archeological collection gathered on the excursion up the Nile was unaccountably and irrevocably lost.

Apparently by this time Kane was inured to the fact that misfortune was bound to accompany him wherever he wandered. At least, none of these earlier calamities deterred him from undertaking further travels and even greater risks.

When well enough to leave Alexandria, he made a tour of Athens, Rome, Paris and England, then headed home when he saw that the Mexican War was in the offing. Unfortunately it was the Army's war. Kane's plea for duty at the front the Navy answered with an assignment aboard the frigate *United States*, bound, not for action in Mexico, but for the coast of Africa on a dull and routine coastal surveying job. Being violently allergic to seasickness, Kane found his assignment particularly difficult to stomach. Yet he lasted on this tour of duty nearly ten months before the pattern of the past was repeated. In February, victim this time of an exceedingly severe case of the coast fever, he returned home nearly a broken man physically.

By the first of November, however, Kane was on his way to Mexico. To expedite his transfer, he had carried his plea for orders direct to President Polk. Polk was so impressed by the young doctor's zeal that he arranged special orders: Kane was to deliver personally to General Scott a dispatch which had three times been intercepted by the enemy.

With his able way of courting danger, Kane quickly acquired a modicum of fame, in Pennsylvania papers at least, and a near-fatal wound in Mexico. With a band of friendly Mexicans, he was heading for the front when guerrillas attacked. Kane's horse was shot from beneath him. By the time the flurry was over a few moments later, he had received a wound in the abdomen. Although with troubles enough of his own, he still found strength to protect, in the face of the collective fury of his companions who were intent on murder, the few prisoners who had survived the short fight. A few days after all this, the final block was put into place in a typical Kane episode: the Doctor got typhus.

By January he was well enough to return to active duty and ship out again, this time bound for Lisbon. Once at sea it was soon clear he was not recovering. Being his own doctor, he prescribed his own cure. "I bled myself," he said, "lost forty ounces of blood, took twenty grains of opium and then, bleached to the color of city milk, got up." This was the same man, racked by pain from wounds and diseases acquired round the world, who within a short time of this self-imposed bleeding cure, would head for the Arctic.

The assignment to the Polar seas came as a complete surprise, while Kane was still on sick leave. "While bathing in the tepid waters of the Gulf of Mexico," he later said, "I received one of those courteous little epistles from Washington which the electric telegraph has made so familiar to naval officers. Seven and a half days later, I had accomplished my overland journey of thirteen hundred miles, and in forty hours more our squadron was beyond the limits of the United States."

The purpose of the expedition was to search for the lost British explorer Sir John Franklin and his crew of 136 men, all of whom had dropped completely from sight over two years earlier. The United States, in two vessels manned by the Navy but financed by the New York merchant Henry Grinnell, was belatedly joining a search that had long been the most intriguing mystery of the day. Already there were over forty ships plying the Polar seas. The eyes of the world were on the Arctic, that mysterious land of snow and ice which could swallow two shiploads of men and leave not a trace of their fate behind.

This first trek of Kane's to the Arctic, the Grinnell Expedition as it came to be called, was a training cruise for his second voyage, the one which he himself commanded and which won him world-wide fame. On this first expedition he shipped only as a physician. That he was allowed to ship in that post was only by chance. Lieutenant De Haven, in charge of the group, hesitated taking the emaciated Kane aboard the moment he met him in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. For the voyage, men with vigor and stamina were needed. In De Haven's eyes Kane looked like a hospital case AWOL, a doctor himself sorely in need of a doctor. But sailing orders came before a replacement could be obtained.

De Haven's doubts about his physician seemed justified the first thirty-one days out from shore. Kane spent the whole month in his bunk, thoroughly and helplessly seasick. At the last port the expedition touched before leaving civilization, De Haven made arrangements for Kane to ship home on an English transport. To effect the transfer, nothing was required but the prostrate doctor's own certification of his unfitness for duty.

This Kane refused to do, and since the Navy was apparently organized along more informal lines in those days, that was that.

From that moment Kane appeared to prosper physically. He quickly got his sea legs and with them his health. The remainder of the voyage, though fascinating to the curious doctor, was uneventful. Since not a trace of Franklin or of his crew had turned up after nearly a year spent scouring the Polar seas, the expedition headed home. Kane had no sooner returned to Philadelphia than he set about to organize his own expedition to the Arctic, a land that intrigued him as no other part of the world he had visited. All adventures of the past he viewed as innocuous larks when compared to the challenges of exploring those "icy halls of cold sublimity," as he called the North.

Kane begged, borrowed, lectured everywhere to finance his return. To get support, he announced his aim was to solve the Sir John Franklin mystery. Another aim, only privately admitted, was to reach the Pole. To Kane, the Pole was important not in itself, as it came to be for later explorers, but only in that it lay on the route of the Northwest Passage, that mythical, navigable passage over the top of the globe. Even after centuries of fruitless searching, the hope still lived that the Northwest Passage existed. Franklin was looking for it when he disappeared. The myth continued to thrive in the 1850's on the rumor, regarded by many as a fact, that near the Pole was a great ice-free sea. Attain that sea, get past the frozen channels to the south, and a man would have an easy sail to the Pole and thence to the other side of the world.

Sufficient contributions for Kane's expedition were at last forthcoming, the ship again being furnished by Mr. Grinnell, and money by several scientific societies, among them the Smithsonian Institute and the American Philosophical Society. On the 30th of May, 1853, Kane and his crew of seventeen in the brig *Advance* left New York—amid the toots and whistles from the harbor and cheers from the shore. They dropped from sight for two years.

They were years of frightful suffering for the fragile Dr. Kane. The first winter bad luck hit hard. The ship became locked in ice much farther south than Kane had anticipated. All too soon it became apparent that the stock of fresh meat was far too small. Nor was it long before the lack of vegetables was reflected in the men's wan faces. As a final insult from the fates, the dogs brought along to haul the sledges developed a mysterious ailment and quickly died.

All these afflictions were reduced to mere annoyances next to the prime source of Kane's troubles—the huge, ghostly icebergs which dotted the seas everywhere. The icebergs' knack for wreaking havoc on the crew of the *Advance* had almost a human quality about it, especially during a storm, when they scudded across the water as swiftly as a ship before the wind. Kane tells of one such night when these traveling mountains of ice nearly crushed the *Advance* into firewood. "I had just turned in to warm and dry myself during a momentary lull," he writes, "when I heard the sharp twanging snap of a cord. Our six-inch hawser had parted, and we were swinging by the two others; the gale roaring like a lion to the southward.

"Half a minute more, and *'twang, twang'* came a second report. I knew it was the whale-line by the shrillness of the ring. Our noble ten-inch manilla still held on. I was hurrying my last sock into its sealskin boot when McGary came waddling down the companion-ladders. 'Captain Kane, she won't hold much longer: it's blowing the devil himself, and I am afraid to surge.' "

Kane went topside immediately. The first thing that greeted his ears was the sound of the anchor line. "Its deep Eolian chant was swelling through all the rattle of the running-gear and moaning of the shrouds. It was the death song! The strands gave way, with the noise of a shotted gun; and, in the smoke that followed their recoil, we were dragged out by the wild ice, at its mercy."

The crew of the brig, once it was in open water, did some pretty warping, but all to no avail. An upturned mass of ice smashed into the bulwarks, depositing a half ton in a single lump on the decks. "And then," Kane goes on, "a new enemy came into sight. Directly in our path . . . was a group of bergs. We had no power to avoid them. . . . Just then a broad sconce-piece or low water-washed berg came driving up from the southward. McGary managed to plant an anchor on its slope and hold on to it by a whale-line. It was an anxious moment. Our noble tow-horse, whiter than the pale horse that seemed to be pursuing us, hauled us bravely on; the spray dashing over his windward flanks, and his forehead ploughing up the lesser ice as if in scorn. The bergs encroached upon us as we advanced: our channel narrowed to a width of perhaps forty feet; we braced the yards to clear the impending ice-walls.

"We passed clear; but it was a close shave—so close that our port quarter-boat would have been crushed if we had not taken it in from the davits—and found ourselves under the lee of a berg, in a comparatively open lead. Never did heart-tried men acknowledge with more gratitude their merciful deliverance from a wretched death."

Despite almost a daily quota of adventures like this, Kane and his crew managed to get through the first winter in fair shape. Then, in early spring, catastrophe struck. An advance party got lost among the icy

Kane carried his plea for orders direct to President Polk.

hummocks. Only the heroic efforts of Kane—the man whose body had been a proving ground for nearly every disease in the book—saved them. The temperature hovered at fifty below while he tramped for eighty-two sleepless hours to effect the rescue. Two men died, several required amputations, but Kane, though delirious at the end, got through the nightmare safely.

As summer approached events took a happier turn. In June the steward Morton spotted an ice-free body of water to the north. The rumor was true then! Here at last was the great Northwest Passage, the passage for which sailors had searched since the time of Columbus. If only the *Advance* could escape its frozen prison, the way was clear.

Delighted as he was with Morton's report, Kane tempered enthusiasm with caution. To his diary he confided that it all might be an "illusory discovery." Of course it was, though later explorers have wondered just what Morton, who was positive he saw no mirage, did see. The most plausible explanation is that the summer sun created a momentary break in the sea of ice, a break that quickly froze with the first dip in the temperature.

Unfortunately Kane was confronted with other predicaments too serious to allow a follow-up of Morton's discovery. Summer was passing and the *Advance* still remained icebound. "It is horrible," Kane confessed in his diary as the second winter approached, "to look forward to another year of darkness and disease." With the onset of winter, these forebodings were borne out. Food and fuel got dangerously low. Generous Eskimos shared their own stores, and for fuel the upper half of the ship was burned. Half the party decided to strike out for civilization, in the hope that if they reached safety a rescue group could be sent back for the others. By December, worn and exhausted, they had returned to the ship with a tale of four horrible months of privation.

WINTER at last ended, and in May Kane and his crew left the ship. For eighty-three days in open boats and on sledges they rowed and trudged. One man died and several became too weak to walk. With their stores gone, with scurvy, snow-blindness and exhaustion a torment to all, even Kane lost hope. "Things get worse and worse," he wrote in his diary. The next day, however, life took on a brighter hue. A seal was killed and with the strength from the meat came also a renewal of hope. Within a week all were safe at a Danish settlement on the Greenland coast.

The natives and settlers on hand to greet the survivors heard the tale of the overland journey from the imprisoned *Advance* with amazement. Kane had led his men on a 1300-mile retreat that still stands as one of the greatest treks in the history of Arctic exploration.

Kane was wounded by a party of Bedouins who tried to rob him again.

News that the Kane Expedition was safe electrified the nation. New York turned out en masse on the party's return. The New York Daily *Times* put the Crimean War on page two and gave over its front page to the doctor. As a poet of the day put it:

> . . . From main to main
> Jubilant to the sky
> Thundered the mighty cry
> HONOR TO KANE!

Within months history books were being rewritten to make room for Kane's exploits and discoveries. Youngsters, who now decided that the career of a Mississippi river boat pilot had less to offer than that of an explorer, tagged after the doctor whenever he appeared in the streets. Even sophisticates like Washington Irving looked on him with only "wonder and admiration."

From all this adulation Kane hid away to write "Arctic Explorations." When the book was published people wondered at its immediate and unexpected popularity. The explanation was simple. Readers were held to the book not so much by Kane's fantastic adventures as by the strange new world he told about. Here for the first time was put on display for America a world so weird and fanciful that alongside it the magnificent images of Dante's Inferno seemed dim and listless. Here was revealed a world where the pale glow of the moon lasted months at a time, where a year divided into a day of six months followed by a similarly long night.

In this world abounded oddities by the hundreds. At sea in summer a ship went crunching through the jewelry of crumbling icebergs. On land were huge glaciers; one measured at least sixty miles across its face and moved at the slow, inexorable pace of a clock's hour hand, crushing everything in its path. Living in this strange world were even stranger inhabitants. In excellent sketches, almost photographic in clarity, Kane pictured monstrous polar bears plundering food caches while half-wild huskies nipped at the marauder's heels. He showed seals whose hides, he said, were so thick bullets ricocheted like pebbles. The Esquimaux —that's the way the word was spelled in the 1850's—were pictured skimming over Arctic seas in their odd kayaks, living in the grotesque, smoke-filled igloos and spearing birds on the wing.

Capturing this world in words and pictures made Kane a fortune, but a fortune he could never use. "The book," he wrote his publishers soon after it was out, "has been my coffin." In search of health he sailed for England, then Havana, where he died on February 16, 1857. Among the millions who mourned the explorer's death there was one who said: "His was a life of untiring industry and spotless virtue. His name will live forever in the annals of America's great and honorable men." Hardly had the orator's words died on the air than Kane's name and deeds passed out of men's memories. With the advent of the Civil War, Dr. Elisha Kent Kane slipped into oblivion, until today his fascinating life has been all but forgotten.

Why Take Chances,

Partners on the graveyard shift at a copper mill, working to get a stake to start an operation of their own. And then—Mike took that chance.

by DON JAMES

IN the loft over the towering ore-bins that bulwarked the bottom of the mountainside flotation mill, Johnny Hoskin swung a ten-pound sledge against the steel bottom of a railroad ore-car hopper.

"Damn!" Irritation and futile anger added power to each vicious swing of the sledge. "Damn frozen ore!" He grunted with the swing.

Across from him, on another catwalk high over the half-empty bins, Mike Shea swung an alternating beat with his own sledge.

A sub-zero Montana wind found generous openings into the loft and swirled through the dimly lit spaciousness. The two men had the highline to themselves on graveyard shift.

Johnny Hoskin stopped swinging and looked under the car and across at his partner.

"Still frozen!" he yelled.

Mike Shea stopped swinging and sat down with his legs dangling over the blackness of the bin. He pushed a battered hat back on his head and wiped perspiration from a rugged face.

"Give 'er the torch," he said.

Hoskin nodded. He pulled a large torch with a half-foot mouth across the tracks, the attached oil- and air-hoses trailing behind it. He lit the torch and adjusted the roaring flame to his satisfaction. Mike went for another torch.

The men played the flames against the bottom of the ore car until red heat spread through the steel and steam hissed away from the thawing ore.

"Deep enough!" Shea shouted.

They turned off the torches, and the silence was sudden after the roaring flames.

"We'll finish by quitting time," Shea said.

He rose from his cramped position and stretched. He was a large, broad man with a blunt face and hard hands that made competent fists.

Hoskin was slim but solid, slightly shorter than his partner. He moved with easy grace as he picked up a sledge and got set to resume the heavy beating.

Shea watched Hoskin swing far under and up: watched the snap of wrists in the last few inches; saw the jolting and sway of the car. He shook his head.

"There's a guy," he thought. "An' he's sure as hell going to be mad at me."

He picked up a sledge and took the alternate beat on the other side of the car. The sledge blows filled the loft with thunderous noise, and the car rocked and jolted.

Ore began to slide and break away from the interior. Hoskin dropped his sledge and reached for a steel bar. He swung himself up to the top edge of the car and worked feverishly barring down the ore. Mike stepped up his sledgehammer attack. Ore crashed into the yawning bin.

They finished the car and Hoskin added the car number to a list at a small built-in shelf against a wall.

"Twelve," he announced. "Swing did nine. Day, eleven. Two of us beat 'em, and they've got larger crews."

"It's colder on graveyard," Shea grinned. "Got to keep warm."

They lit cigarettes, despite NO SMOKING signs, and cupped them in their hands. Darwin, the shift boss, might show up any moment unless he already had looked in and was in the "dry," changing clothes to go off shift.

Below them the huge door to a bin opened with a hiss of air to release ore to the conveyor belt running below the hopper. The belt would take the ore to the first crushers. Then other belts would take it up the mountainside mill to the top bins, and the crushers and rolls that pulverized it to dust to be mixed with water and sent over ridged, vibrating tables and through flotation tanks where formula oils were added. Frothy bubbles on the top of the agitated mixture would be scraped off by revolving paddles and dried on huge rotating drying drums to a concentrated dust that was almost pure mineral for the smelters.

Mike heard the crash of the door closing.

"Pete ain't knocked off yet."

Hoskin smiled. "Pete always gets the last minute in."

"When a guy's married and got a family, he worries more about his job," Mike observed philosophically. "Glad we're single."

They dropped time cards into a small box and started down the trestle that swung over from the mountainside in an easy grade for the electric switch engine.

In the dry beneath the machine shop, there was moist heat and the odor of hot steampipes and perspiration. Men were cleaning up and changing from work-clothes.

The whistle blew somewhere on the mill site, the wind whipping the screech away into the night.

Mike, ready to leave, picked up his lunch bucket.

"Lift a couple?" he asked.

Hoskin nodded. "Sure. We'll stop at Denny's."

WITH others they hurried in the biting wind to the parking lot. Mike pushed his car hard down the hill, recklessly slewing on the slippery road, grinning in delight.

"You'll pile us up some night," Hoskin warned.

"Cautious. Always cautious. You got to take chances, Johnny."

Johnny looked up uncomfortably. "Why should we take chances—when we've got something to look forward to? By spring we've got the dough for our own operation. We'll have money to build our bin, buy rails and cars, all the stuff we need to get into business. And we've got bauxite. Lots of it, and aluminum is paying off. Why take chances, Mike?"

Mike snorted. "By spring we got enough dough to get out on a limb. You've got to have capital to operate right, Johnny. We've been kiddin' ourselves."

Mike?

"No." Stubbornness was heavy in Hoskin's voice. "We can get a few cars of the stuff out. Enough to get going."

Mike skidded around a corner and straightened out the car.

"We've got five hundred less than we had, Johnny," he said, and stared straight ahead at the street.

An ominous silence filled the car for a moment, then Johnny Hoskin spoke softly.

"Black-jack or the crap table?" he said.

"Pan. A dollar-chip game. I got taken."

"We had an agreement, Mike."

"Sure. Stop worryin'. I'll get it back.

"We agreed to toss into the kitty. That's our capital."

"You've got to take chances, Johnny. It's better we start our operation with plenty of dough. You can't work on a shoestring."

"That wasn't your money to lose."

Mike Shea slowed the car a little. "Take it easy," he said. "If I'd won and chipped in an extra five hundred, that'd be okay. I lose—you cry like I stole the dough. No Cornish Cousin Jack calls me a thief."

"So maybe you are. It wasn't your dough."

"Makin' somethin' of it, Cousin Jack?"

"Stop the car."

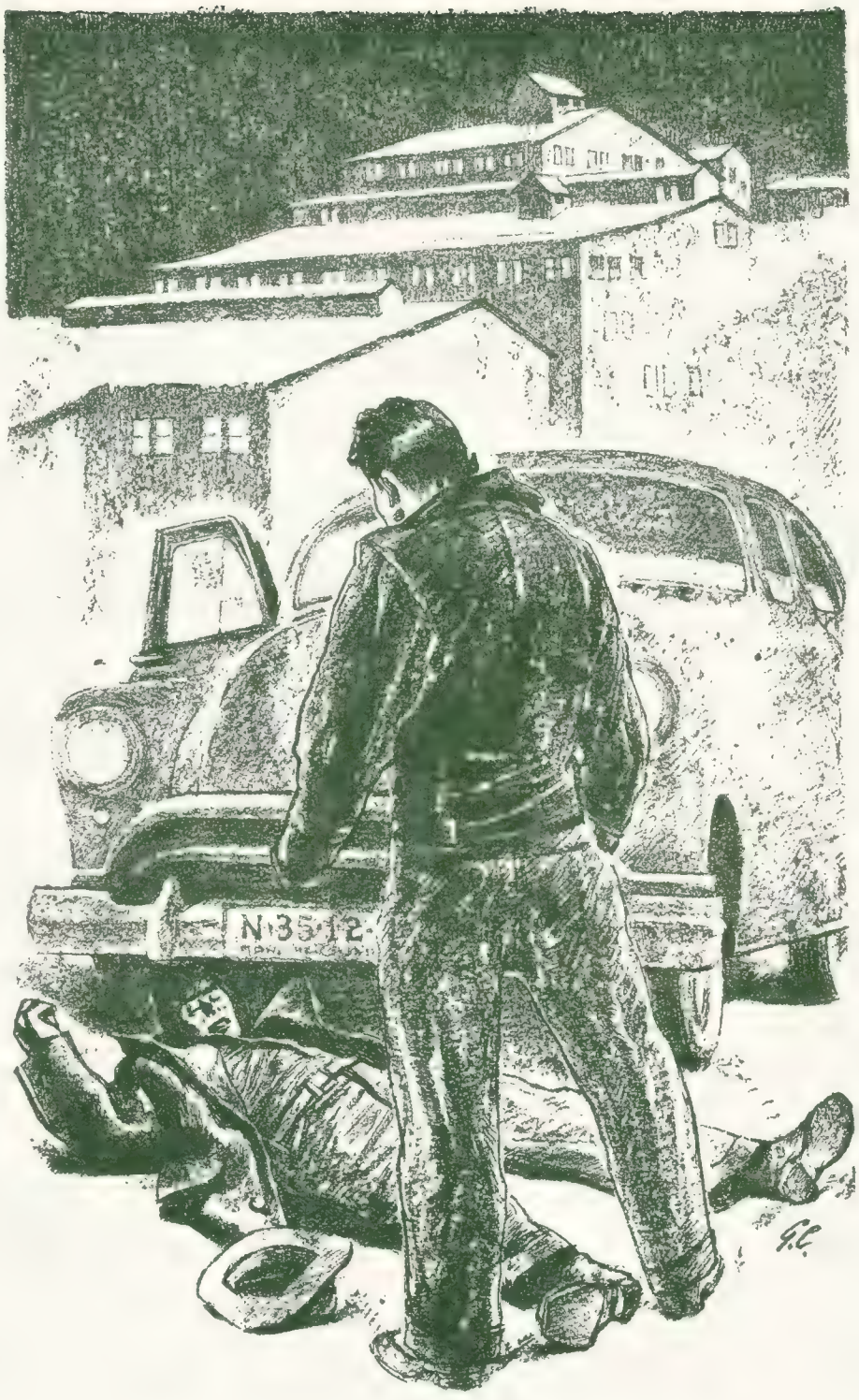
The car jolted to a stop, and the two men piled out on opposite sides. They met in front of the headlights in a violent clash of hard, conditioned bodies; a grunting of expletives, a thud of fists.

They fought hard and viciously. Blood trickled from Johnny's mouth. They circled lightly, feet sliding over the packed snow. Johnny went down. He rolled and grasped wildly at Mike's legs, caught a trouser cuff and jerked.

Mike's feet shot up. His head whipped back against the car hood as he came down. He moaned and was quiet. A dark smear crept into the sheepskin of his mackinaw collar.

Johnny Hoskin stood over him with doubled fists.

"Get up, you black Irish Mick! Get up and fight!"



"Get up, you black Irish Mick! Get up and fight!"

Mike was suspiciously quiet. A car skidded to a stop, and two cops scrambled out.

"What goes on here?" one of them demanded. He faced Johnny with a hard, weathered old face. "Drunk, are ye? Drunk an' disorderly, an' fightin' in the streets!"

"It's private," Johnny snapped.

"Private, is it? Private ye'll be in the drunk tank."

"I'm not drunk. We just got off shift."

The big cop scowled. "Then what's wrong with ye? Fightin'?"

Johnny shrugged. The other cop was bent over Mike.

"Is he hurt bad?" Johnny asked.

The cop shook his head. "Knocked cold. Got a small cut on the back of his neck."

Mike sat up and tenderly felt the back of his head. The cop helped him up.

"I've a mind to run ye both in," the older cop said.

Johnny swung into the bin and stumbled over the ore toward the prostrate man. He had to hurry.

Mike managed a grin. "What? Run in a good Irish mick named Shea? Ye'd be runnin' me in for fightin'? An Irishman?"

The older man's eyes twinkled. "Well, now, so it's Irish ye are? An' how did this one—who looks like a Cornish Cousin Jack—knock ye down? No doubt ye slipped on the snow?"

"No doubt," Mike said. "Otherwise how could a Cousin Jack ever knock down a fightin' Irish mick?"

"Then we'll forget it," the big cop decided. He motioned to the younger one. "We'll be gettin' on."

The partners watched the police car drive away.

"Those cracks about Cousin Jacks," said Johnny Hoskin. "I don't like 'em."

"Go to hell, Cousin. An' I'll buy the drinks."

After a moment, Johnny nodded. It was as close to an apology as he'd ever get from big Mike Shea. It was as much as he'd ever got in the three years they'd worked together and lived together.

Three years of hard work, hard living and hard friendship: putting money into their bauxite claim; working in the big mines and mills in the winter for a grubstake, sweating the summers through at the claim.

It was the gamble of the mining claim that had appealed to the big Irishman. It was the same love of a gamble that now threatened their success. Big Shea would never admit it, but he had offered his interpretation of an apology: "I'll buy the drinks."

Johnny Hoskin wiped blood from the corner of his mouth.

"Okay," he said. "You buy."

THAT week the weather settled into the heart of winter, and the thermometer hovered around thirty degrees below zero. Hopper doors on the cars froze so solidly that half-sticks of low-powered dynamite were used to open them. Railroad men howled about damaged cars, and Johnny Hoskin and Mike Shea worked harder and swung their sledges with added vigor. They spoke infrequently, on or off the job. The fight still hung over them, something undecided and in abeyance.

At first it was Johnny Hoskin's sullen resentment of Mike's misuse of common funds that sustained the coolness between them. But it was the moodiness of the big Irishman that took over the rift with an ugliness and bad temper that made hard planes of a face usually pleasant in a smile. . . .

Knowles, the foreman made a surprise visit one night.

"You boys are setting the pace for the other shifts," he said. He looked down into the depths of a bin. "I'll be needing a shift-boss for the yard crew soon. You two might have to toss for the job."

Mike Shea laughed without humor. "Give it to the Cousin Jack. Two bits more an hour is big money to him."

Knowles gave him a surprised look and glanced at the anger in Johnny Hoskin's face.

"What the hell's the matter with you two?" he asked.

"Skip it," Hoskin said.

Knowles shrugged and turned toward the stairs to the crushers. The two men watched him leave, and then Hoskin faced Shea.

"Your cracks aren't funny, Shea," he growled.

"I've been thinkin', Cousin. You want to break up this partnership? You figure I stole that five hundred bucks from the joint bank account. Maybe you want to buy me out. I'll knock off the five hundred."

Hoskin bit his teeth together.

"You're asking me to buy?"

"Why not?" Shea demanded.

"You know damned well I can't. I haven't the money."

"Okay, then. We're in it together. We vote an equal say-so on what we do. So I figured to make some dough

for us in a pan game. My vote's as good as yours."

"You're acting like a ten-year-old kid. You lost the dough. Forget it. We're not broke, and we'll have enough to get started. Just don't sit in any more pan games with our dough."

"A buck's no good when you need two."

"One buck is better than none."

Mike suddenly turned away and picked up a sledge. He attacked a car with silent anger until the blows set up small thunder in the loft.

Grimly Hoskin went to the other side of the car, and the power of his sledge joined the Irishman's. The car swayed on its trucks.

A sharp worry began to gnaw at Hoskin. The moodiness and bad temper were building in the big Irishman, and they bred trouble. There had been the monumental drunk in Anaconda when Shea had landed behind bars. There had been the wild, swinging Irishman in the center of a Mullen saloon, and alarmed citizens talking about a lynching while the crash of furniture and shattered glass came from the building mingled with Shea's wild shouts.

And there had been the card-table in Butte where Shea had watched cards fall before him with bleary, whisky-tired eyes; when the kibitzers had watched him shove the winter's savings of three years ago to the center of the table on a wild bluff with a pair of deuces showing, and nothing in the hole. A hard-faced gambler had raked in the stud-poker pot with three sevens.

"I've got to keep the lid on him," Hoskin thought. "It's too close to spring."

A BLIZZARD started the next afternoon. Mike Shea didn't show up at the room after he went out alone for lunch. An hour before shift time, Hoskin started to call. The Irishman was at none of his usual haunts. Hoskin got a ride to the mill with another worker. Shea didn't show up.

By midnight the snow had drifted solidly across tracks. At two o'clock Hoskin and a substitute for Shea were sent home. The train crew was stalled and there were no full cars on the highline.

It was three o'clock when Johnny arrived at the room. Mike hadn't returned, and Johnny called the High Level bar.

"He was here," a hoarse voice told him. "Went out about an hour ago, Johnny."

"Packing a load?"

"Ridin' high. We was glad to see him get out."

"Listen. Did he play any pan?"

"Yeah. Said the two-bit game was too slow."

"Did you cash a check for him?"

There was a brief silence. "Two for two hundred each. Why? They're good, ain't they?"

"They're good," Johnny said in a tight voice, and hung up.

It was a useless search.

A bartender at the Sump shook his head sadly.

"Mike Shea? Yeah. He was in here. Cashed a fifty-buck check, Johnny. You oughta round him up. He's one wild harp."

The house man in the back room of the Gallows Frame nodded curtly. "He was here. Started a fight."

"Where did he go?"

The houseman shrugged. "You a friend of his?"

"Room with him."

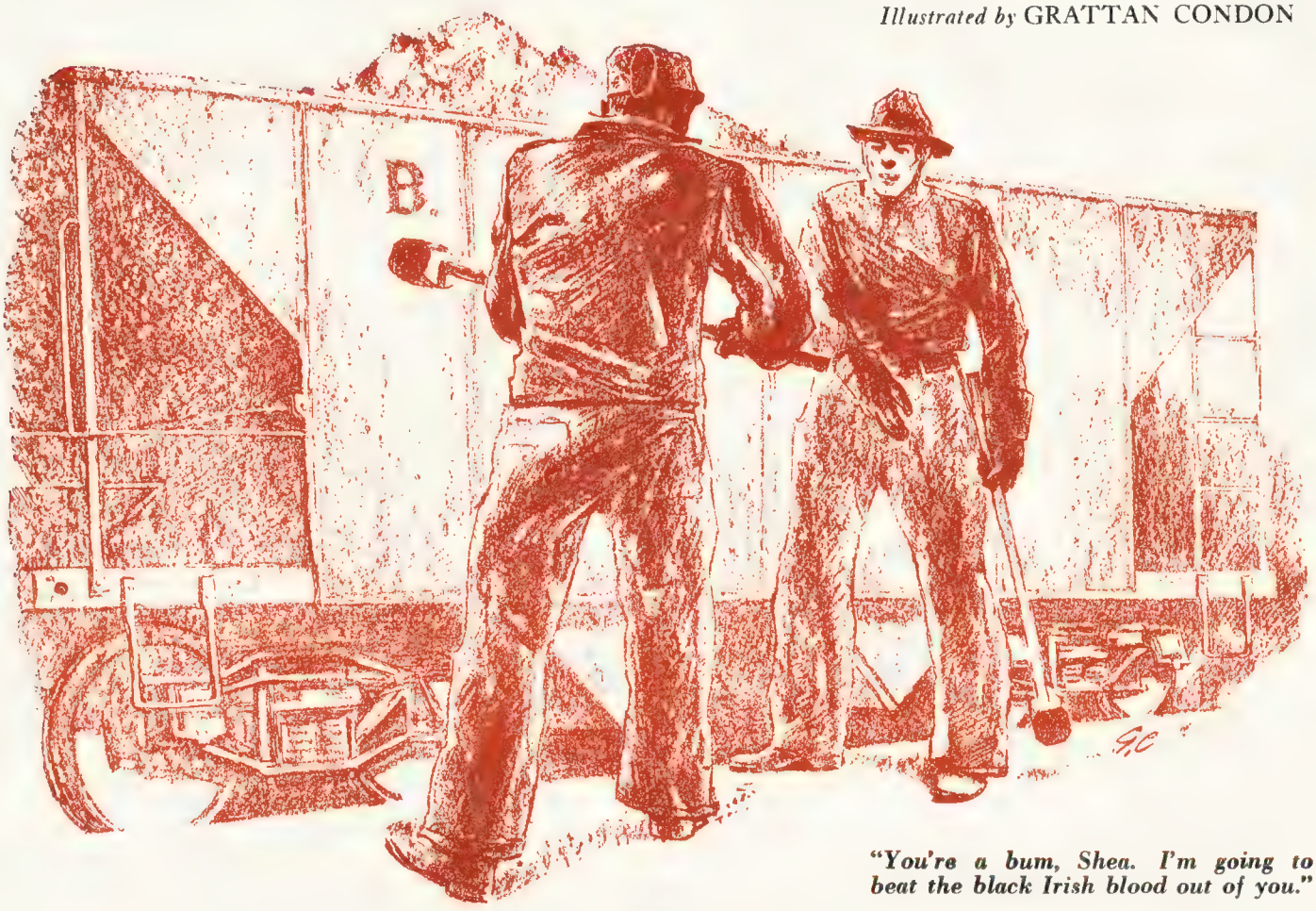
"Better find him. He's headin' for trouble." The house man looked speculatively at Johnny. "The boss cashed a check for a hundred for him. He's good for it, isn't he?"

"He always has been, hasn't he?" Johnny said curtly, and turned and left the back room. He stopped at the bar. Anger was a driving drill that was creating white heat.

"Give me a shot," he snapped at the barkeep.

He drank the whisky straight, had another, and the house bought one.

Illustrated by GRATTAN CONDON



"You're a bum, Shea. I'm going to beat the black Irish blood out of you."

The first grayness of impending dawn was in the night, but the places still ran wide open. It was a mining town, and men were getting off shift at all hours.

He ordered a boilermaker at the Plaza. He gulped the straight whisky and followed it with beer and asked the bartender his question.

"Mike Shea?" the bartender said. "Yeah. He was here. Sat in the dollar pan game awhile. Cashed a check for fifty. You're his partner, Johnny. You better find him and get him home."

It was a fast procession of saloons and cardrooms. The boilermakers built steadily, and always he was just a little behind Mike Shea, and always there was a check that had been cashed.

At five o'clock he was questioning Curly Lorenz, the man who ran the Hardrock.

"Mike left here about a half-hour ago," Curly said. "Took a taxi."

"He's not driving?"

Curly rubbed his chin. "Not now he ain't, Johnny."

"What d'ya mean?"

"He went broke in the stud game and sold me his car for fifteen hundred cash. Took a thousand-dollar bill and five hundreds and walked out of here, plenty tight."

Johnny Hoskin stared at the gambler.

"When I catch up with him—" he muttered.

"Take it easy, Johnny. It's his dough—his car."

"His dough? Hell!"

"Come over to the bar. I'll buy a drink," Curly said.

Near noon, Johnny staggered into their room.

"Gonna beat your brains out, you Irish dog!"

He stood in the doorway with clenched fists and bleary eyes. The room was empty. The bed had been made, and Mike wasn't there.

He swayed to the closet. Mike's two suits were gone.

"Skipped out," Johnny mumbled.

THE third night Johnny went to work. He was late. No one was in the dry. He changed and climbed through the night to the highline. The cold still held and a thermometer at the highline door read thirty-two degrees below zero.

It was warmer in the building. At the far end of the barn-like structure a man worked on a car. A sledge crashed against steel.

Johnny picked up a sledge and walked carefully along a catwalk until he stood behind the laboring Irishman.

"You want it now or after the shift?" Johnny Hoskin said.

Mike Shea turned. The sledge hung easily in his hand. Sweat dampened his face. His eyes were red-rimmed, and he needed a shave.

"Any time, Cousin. Now or later. Suit yourself."

The two men stood tensely poised. Johnny's hand tightened around the sledge handle.

"A great guy," Johnny said softly. "My pal. My partner. Losing our dough on a drunk. You're a bum, Shea. I'm going to beat the black Irish blood out of you."

"That I doubt, Cousin. I'm going to take you apart. We're washed up. Followin' me around the other night. Givin' me a bad name in every bar in town. When I moved the stuff out of our room, I moved out everything else with you—except one thing. I still owe you a workin'-over."

"And dough. You blew the bankroll. You're crooked, Shea."

Johnny let the sledge swing back. Mike glanced at it and raised his.

"You figure that way, take a swing, Cousin," he invited.

Darwin, the shift boss, hurried around the end of a car.

"The bins are practically empty, and they're cryin' for ore!" he yelped. "You got to dump rock, or we shut down. That damn train broke down again today. Not a car spotted until an hour ago."

"We'll dump 'em," Mike said without taking his eyes from Johnny's face. "We'll keep the crushers going."

"It'll be tough. They're frozen solid," Darwin said. "I'd give you help, but we're short-handed."

He left them and hurried downstairs toward the crushers. A door slammed after him.

"Okay," Johnny said. "After shift. When we leave the dry. In back of it."

"That's fine with me, Cousin."

Johnny turned and walked toward a torch. Mike swung his sledge against a car with an angry grunt. . . .

By four o'clock Johnny began to feel the purge of hard work and sweat. The hangover was almost gone.

The work was going tough. Frozen ore clung to the cars. Hopper doors refused to open. The smoke and caustic smell of burning oil from the torches hung in a pall over the highline.

Far down in the yawning cavities of steel bins a thin layer of sodden ore barely covered the floor plates.

Several times one of the two men put on safety harness and climbed down with steel bars to loosen wet ore hanging up in the bins. The hopper had to be fed for the rumbling conveyor belts and the roaring crushers.

Mike set half a stick of powder in a hopper door and lit the fuse. They stepped far away and waited. The explosion cracked the door away from the frozen ore. Mike use a car wrench to trip the release, bearing down with all his weight. Slowly the door jarred down. The ore hung solidly, unmoving.

They put torches to work and the sledge hammers and Johnny routed out an air hammer for the sides of the car, but it was underneath where it was almost impossible to work with the air hammer that the good work was done. The hand sledges with the quick, driving snap far under and up did the work.

The ore started to move and a hole dribbled through. Mike swung up on the car with a bar and slashed and pried. Suddenly the ore gave way and cascaded through the hopper. Johnny turned the torch to the other half of the bi-sectioned car.

Mike looked down.

"Muckstick!"

Johnny pushed a shovel up to him Mike took it and began to scrape down the last of the sticking ore, working fast and hard against time and the hungry bin below.

JOHNNY directed the torch flame against the other half of the car. He was glad to use the torch. It would save his strength. He'd need every bit of it to offset the heavier body of the Irishman, to withstand the rocking blows from the hamlike fists. That he had to do. He'd promised himself that delight of revenge.

Mike's shovel clattered against a rail and fell. Mike's leg came through the hopper. The big man clutched at the smooth steel and swung a foot frantically to catch a rail.

Then he was gone into the dimness of the bin.

Johnny shut off the torch. This accident had happened before when men tried to work too fast and took too many chances.

He listened. Mike moaned and Johnny saw him sprawled on the ore near the hopper door. Even as Johnny saw him, the door hissed up and ore settled, pulling the man down.

Johnny remembered when the Swede, working alone, had fallen into the bin. Pete, the crusherman, remembered that night, too. He had raised the door, and he saw the Swede come down the hopper just as he closed the valve to bring the heavy steel door knifing down. There was no chance to stop it and the Swede was only partly through when the door smashed shut.

Johnny stared down at the fallen man and the intensity of his anger still was there. A hard-earned grubstake thrown away over the card-tables! He felt a desperate urge to pound his fists into the Irishman's

face, to bring blood, to see the big body fall.

"He's mine," he growled. "He's my meat. Not that damn hopper's."

A safety harness and rope were against the building wall fifty yards away. Shea was almost over the hopper. There was no time for harness.

Steel rungs were set into the side of the bin. Johnny swung into the bin and started down the rungs. His feet were on the ore. He stumbled over it toward the prostrate man.

Just as his fingers dug into the heavy leather belt Mike wore, the hopper door opened. The two men slithered down with the ore. Johnny fought the sliding rock until the door closed; desperately he dragged Mike Shea toward the steel rungs.

Ore slipped beneath his feet and carried them back. Mike was conscious and moaning. He was moving his arms and legs in a dazed attempt to crawl.

A new rumble came above the roar of the crushers below them. Johnny looked up. The train crew was there with another string of cars.

Johnny dragged hard at the fallen man. He had to hurry. If the moving train hit the spotted cars to pick up the empties, the jar could break loose the half-car of warmed ore above the bin. Tons of rock could break loose from the car sides and come crashing down into the bin and crush the men struggling toward the rungs.

A hard jar could do it. He had to get up the rungs, he thought—close to the bin sides and higher.

Now he was at the steel rungs; he gripped one. The rumble of wheels above was dying. Abruptly the cars jolted. Ore trickled and suddenly roared down into the bin.

Somehow Johnny had Mike between him and the rungs, holding one arm over his head to shield them.

Ore crashed behind them; a piece hit his shoulder. He fought to retain his grasp.

Then it was quiet. The hopper door to the crushers went up and ore settled again. Johnny gritted his teeth and hung on. He yelled and after a moment a trainman looked down at them.

"Give us a hand!"

The trainman looked startled. "Hang on, Johnny! Mike's hurt?"

"Not bad, I think. Get some ropes."

It was almost time for the whistle. Mike finished dressing and shook his head.

"Coulda killed me," he grinned at Darwin. "Just knocked me cold."

"Lucky that Johnny saw it. You might have been another Swede."

"Yeah. Hoskin is one up on me now."

"Go ahead, Cousin," said Mike, "I'm takin' this beatin' because you got a right to give it."

Johnny glared at him. He picked up his lunch bucket as the whistle blew. Mike followed him out.

The others went past them as Johnny stopped to light a cigarette. When he was alone with Mike he said: "Now. In back of the building. I saved you for this."

Mike's face was blank of expression, his eyes steady. "Okay," he said. He turned and led the way.

It was deserted and cold in the gray dawnlight behind the building. The ground was covered with snow. Sub-zero weather made steam of their breathing. Silently they put down their lunch buckets and took off their coats.

Mike turned, stood quietly facing Johnny.

"Okay, Cousin," he said.

Johnny's fist lashed out and he had the good feeling of the solid jar of it against Mike's jaw. He followed with

pumping lefts and rights and the big man fell back and staggered.

Suddenly Johnny lowered his fists.

"You're not fighting, damn you! Put up your fists!"

Mike was motionless, his hands hanging at his sides, his broken lips parted in a smile.

"Go ahead, Cousin. You're wrong about a few things, but a little money is too damned important to you for you to savvy a guy like me. So you got to blow your top. Go ahead, Cousin Jack. I'm takin' this beatin' because you got a right to give it. If it wasn't for you they'd be takin' me to the morgue in two pieces like they did the Swede. You want to beat hell outa me, Cousin, go ahead. I won't lift a hand—I'm that glad to be alive."

"I'm going to beat hell out of you because you're a bum and a crook, Shea. You double-crossed me. If you weren't a crook, you'd fight!"

Mike wiped the back of a hand across his lips.

"You're too quick to jump, Johnny. So maybe I owe *you* a favor," he said quietly. "Maybe I got to do something big for *you*. Like teachin' you to ask before you slug!"

Johnny saw the fist coming. When he opened his eyes, Mike Shea was cradling his head on a massive thigh and rubbing snow on his face. Johnny shook his head and sat up.

"Cousin Jack, you don't stop to ask," said Shea. "You want to listen now?"

Hoskin struggled to sit up.

Shea said: "Sure, I lost the dough in the bank—about fifteen hundred of it—an' I sold the car and deposited that fifteen hundred to the account the next mornin'. The dough's all there. You want us to draw it and split it? Or you want to buy my half of the claim with your share? I'll sell."

Johnny Hoskin swallowed hard and felt his battered jaw. He pushed himself to his feet and picked up his coat. He got into it and buttoned it and picked up his lunch bucket.

Mike Shea got into his coat and carefully blew blood from a battered nose in honest workingman fashion.

JOHNNY wearily pulled a clean handkerchief from a pocket and handed it to the Irishman.

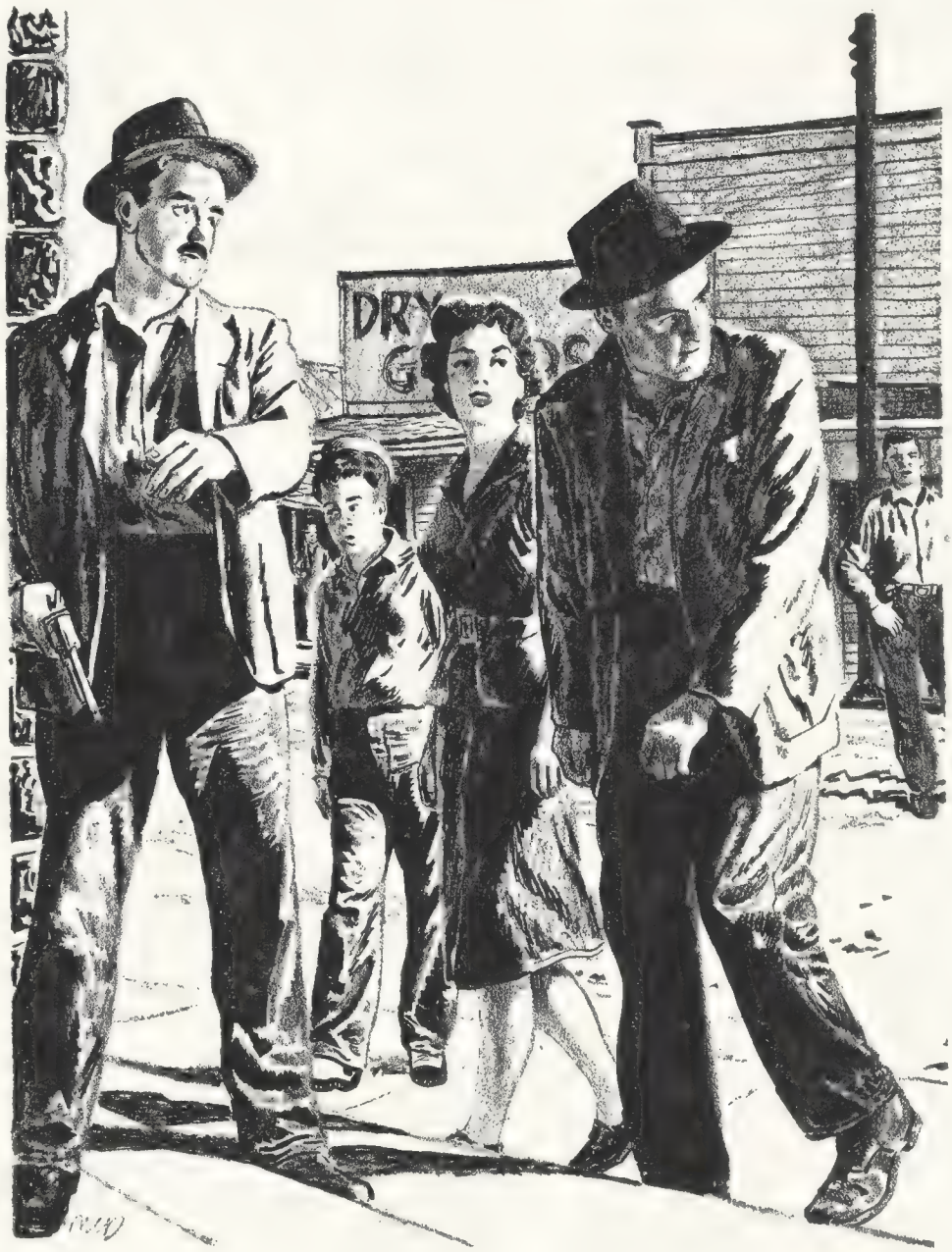
"That looks like hell," he sighed. "Here. Use this."

Mike used it lustily.

"Now," and Johnny Hoskin smiled tightly, "I'll buy you a drink, partner."

Mike Shea nodded and grinned. Then they braced the cold wind as they started the long walk to the bus line. They didn't bother to shake hands; there was no need to, between partners. —THE END

The F.B.I.



The gruesome story spread quickly. Public feeling fanned into fury. Fearing

PERSPIRATION beaded the wrinkled forehead of Big Jim, the giant-sized sourdough, as he stood in his cold cell in the Alaskan outpost jail. His huge hands were moist as he wrapped his fingers around the bars of the window, stared bewilderedly into nowhere and silently prayed someone would believe him.

Old Scottie, his neighboring prospector and friendly rival for almost half a century, had been found murdered in his cabin. And everybody thought Big Jim had done it. Because the two men had recently quarreled; and Big Jim's rifle had been fired recently—and the bullet was of the same caliber as the one which had killed old Scottie.

Worse yet, bloodstains had been found on Big Jim's socks when the police had come to question him.

Protects *the* Innocent

Since the Dillinger case, our Federal Bureau of Investigation has justly won frequent praise for running down public enemies. Its equally important work of freeing from suspicion people unjustly accused is less well known.

by JOE P. FAULKNER

violence, the Sheriff took into protective custody the camp owner, wife and son.

As he gazed hopelessly out at the Northern wilds, Big Jim's heart pounded with the realization that the noose of circumstantial evidence was tightening around his neck.

UNKNOWN to him, however, the socks, rifle and bullets were at that time en route by dogsled and airplane from that desolate frontier to Washington, D.C., for testing in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Technical Laboratory.

A few days later, Big Jim was escorted to the Sheriff's office. He had a sinking sensation in the pit of his stomach, but he was resolved that nothing could make him confess to a crime which he hadn't committed.

"You are free," he was told. "The FBI has proved your innocence, and now it is officially on record that you had nothing at all to do with killing old Scottie."

Exhaustive scientific testing in the FBI's technical laboratory had showed that the blood specimen on Big Jim's socks *had* been reindeer blood, as he had claimed all along. Examination of the fatal bullet had established that it could not possibly have been fired from Big Jim's rifle.

The FBI's findings were more than corroborated later when another man was arrested, tried and found guilty of the slaying which had so narrowly missed ruining, if not ending, an innocent man's life.

"That case," comments J. Edgar Hoover, FBI Director, "is typical of many such FBI assignments. We derive more satisfaction in proving an accused person is innocent than in showing a supposedly innocent person is guilty."

THE FBI's incredible success as a relentless law enforcement agency which hunts down guilty criminals and brings about their imprisonment, is known throughout the world.

Its operations in the opposite direction, however, are comparatively unknown.

"Actually," Mr. Hoover states, *"we spend much more time and effort keeping people out of jail than we do in putting people in jail!*

"We undertake an enormous amount of work every day to prove particular persons had no part in particular crimes. As a routine part of our daily job, we free from suspicion many more persons than we finally mark as guilty."

Amazing numbers of wrongfully accused persons are cleared by the FBI, some even against their own will.

Big Jim had a sinking sensation in the pit of his stomach, but he wouldn't confess to a crime he hadn't committed.

Many make voluntary confessions to crimes which they did not commit, and are absolved by the FBI despite their own refusals to help prove their own innocence.

Before blurting out their irrational admissions, some "confessors" go to infinite trouble to acquaint themselves with all known details of cases in which they desire to become involved. Thus prepared, they launch into lengthy, convincing recitations of spurious self-guilt.

One of the hurdles which invariably trips such persons and causes them to stumble into innocence is the Bureau's famed technical laboratory, the greatest scientific crime-detection center on earth.

WHETHER the accused have been pushed or have wilfully plunged into a quagmire of incriminating circumstances, the technical laboratory spotlights their innocence — if they are guiltless.

More than twenty-five thousand definite suspects were examined by the FBI in the investigation of the 1936 kidnap-murder of ten-year-old Charles Fletcher Mattson, son of a Tacoma, Wash., doctor—and *all* were cleared.

Dozens of those investigated for this crime actually confessed. Some were motivated by a desire for publicity; some were mentally ill; others suffered deep psychopathic urges to identify themselves with responsibility of a sensational tragedy.

To appreciate fully the tremendous work sweated out by the FBI in clearing this mammoth parade of suspects —any one of whom could have been made the scapegoat by a less conscientious agency—consider the case of just one of the individuals:

Police called FBI attention to an alien paroled from a Washington State prison only four months before the Tacoma youngster was abducted and slain. This ex-convict's description was similar to that of the kidnap-murderer. When released, this alien had in his possession two rubber stamps. The Mattson boy's ransom notes were printed with rubber stamps. A condition of the prisoner's parole was that he leave the country. He had failed to do so. Knowing he faced return to prison if apprehended, he lived the haunted life of a fugitive, wandering from one cheap hotel and flophouse to another, never staying at one place more than a few days.

It took five years of exhaustive trailing, but the FBI finally tracked down their slippery quarry who had been roaming the countryside under an assumed name. Special agents established his true identity as the long-sought suspect—and then cleared him of all suspicion in the Mattson crime.

"The innocent individual," Hoover stresses, "is more secure today than ever before in the sanctity of his personal rights.

"The meticulous care exercised by modern law-enforcement in protecting the innocent represents, in my opinion, one of the great attributes of the American way of life."

In no other place on earth are falsely accused persons as safe as in this country, especially if the FBI is active in the investigation of cases in which they are involved.

In Georgia, a certain man was arrested and charged with the murder of his wife after she had been found dead of a pistol wound in circumstances tending to incriminate her husband.

Local police discovered a note purportedly written by the wife shortly before her death. In the note the writer had expressed despondency and announced intentions to kill herself.

Local investigators studied the note, asked skeptically: "Did she really write it?"

The husband was put on trial.

But the doubtful note had been sent to the FBI's technical laboratory. During the trial, one of the FBI's handwriting experts appeared, testified that the note was genuine, that it definitely had been written by the wife. The husband was freed.

THE FBI *without charge* will send its agents, technicians, scientists, or other personnel, anywhere in the country to confirm personally all results of evidence examinations. All have been specially trained in courtroom procedure and in giving testimony.

Also, all facilities of the laboratory are available without charge to any law-enforcement agency in the nation, whether in a tiny, remote village or in the most modern metropolis.

"We undertake an enormous amount of work every day to prove particular persons had no part in particular crimes," Hoover emphasizes.

The laboratory is a virtual fairyland of scientific marvels where shrouds of misinformation and unfounded rumor

threatening to wreck the life of some innocent person are ripped away. Examiners are all specialists in their respective fields, and are provided with the most modern scientific apparatus. New and improved instruments are acquired for the laboratory as they are developed. An unrelenting research is constantly going forward to produce new techniques, new equipment and new approaches.

Established in 1932, this superior crime workshop is the scene of endless activity in producing perjury-proof evidence which delivers the blameless from the ranks of suspicion.

This is accomplished through the expert use of x-rays, cameras, optical micrometers, microtomes, micromanipulators, spectographs, thread and thread-twist counters, and scores of other precision instruments.

Scientific miracles are performed in highly specialized tests with ceaseless repetition. A sheet of paper, burned almost to ashes, was sent in from a Texas town. An accused man said that a message which would clear him of an accusation had been written on this now flame-ravaged scrap of paper.

FBI examiners put the charred sheet through their magical processes, and as though Salem witchcraft had been suddenly reborn, the fire-consumed message was summoned to both visibility and readability. The man in Texas was cleared.

FROM Wilmington, Ohio, came a check. A woman there had been arrested and charged with passing the check, too high for her bank account to honor.

She had insisted to police that she had written a notation on the check, asking it be not deposited or cashed until later.

The man to whom she had given the check disputed her story. He produced the check for police inspection; it bore no such notation.

The woman was headed for jail.

But the check was sent to the FBI's technical laboratory. Technicians, with the use of ultra-violet light, found the check had disturbed fibers. Further treatment, and across the face of the oblong piece of paper leaped the words which had been eradicated: "Hold till I pay."

The woman was freed.

No legitimately received case is too small, none too large to receive the full benefits of FBI attention.

In Islip, N. Y., a neighborhood dog was fiendishly killed with a rope. Suspicion pointed to a certain man in whose home was found a length of rope which appeared to be part of the one with which the pet had been so cruelly tortured to death. Village animal lovers became outraged.

The piece of rope from the suspect's home, and that which had been used to kill the dog, were transmitted to the technical laboratory. They were found to be of different weave and structure. The innocent man was cleared.

More serious was the case of the tourist-camp owner in Tennessee. Two of his employees, a woman and her husband, reported to the local Sheriff that they had seen their employer slip out to a bonfire the night before and hurl a newborn baby into the flames.

He had been paid $300 for the job, his fifth within a month, the couple said.

The Sheriff accompanied the woman and her husband back to the camp, poked the smoldering ashes of the bonfire. He recovered some small bones, bits of flesh and remains of what could have been baby-clothes.

In the camp-owner's home the Sheriff seized a red-stained sheet, said by the complainants to have been on the bed when the tiny victim had been born.

Carefully the Sheriff packed all items, along with samples of soil from around the bonfire, and shipped them to the technical laboratory.

Details of the gruesome story spread quickly. Public feeling fanned into anger, then fury. Fearing violence, the Sheriff took into protective custody the camp owner, his wife and their son.

Townsmen gathered around the jail, scowled as they glanced ominously at the barred structure's entrance.

As the tension mounted toward explosive intensity, a man shouldered his way into the jail; he was the messenger with the FBI's report on the evidence examined at the technical laboratory.

Serological and microscopic analysis had shown the bones from the bonfire, used for years to burn rubbish, were of chicken and other fowl; the bits of flesh were ground pork, all probably table refuse. Chemical analysis had disclosed that the burned clothing, which had not been infant's apparel, bore no bloodstains; the red blotches on the camp-owner's sheet had not been blood. And there was no evidence of human blood found in the soil samples.

The falsely accused camp owner, and his family, were cleared of all suspicion and restored to community respect.

As a humorous postscript to this incident, the woman and her husband who had spitefully accused the camp owner were arrested the day after the FBI's evidence had cleared the unjustly accused camp owner. They were charged with stealing chickens from their employer while he languished behind bars, so uncomfortably close to disaster.

"Freeing from suspicion and possible subjection to severe penalties persons upon whom circumstances or even deliberate misinformation have cast shadows is one of our greatest concerns," Hoover emphasizes.

"Special agents, trained to observe all phases of their work with objectivity, are also schooled in another basic principle: A case is never marked closed until *all* facts, complete and irrefutable, leave no possible alternative."

This is a principle, in theory, with many law-enforcement agencies. With the FBI it is a principle in constant operation.

"The FBI deals in facts and facts alone," Hoover makes clear. "The facts, when established, do not convict the innocent. Methodical elimination of all blameless suspects is a standard technique in fixing responsibility upon the one whom the facts will not eliminate—the one who is guilty of the crime."

A GROUP of bandits staged a midnight robbery of the Fort Sam Houston (Texas) Golf Course Clubhouse, a military reservation. When the caretaker resisted, the gang pistol-whipped him into submission, locked him in a closet, and fled with two safes they had been unable to force open.

One of the bandits was subsequently arrested. He named six others as accomplices, one of whom he described as "a light-haired guy known as 'Blondy'."

The man called Blondy was thereupon arrested. He had no alibi; he could not remember where he had been on the night of the robbery. Although he denied participation in the crime, he was positively identified in a police lineup as one of the bandits. He was formally charged with participating in the robbery.

The FBI, however, refused to accept this as final. Special agents continued to check. They dug deeply into the gang's background, questioning even the mobsters' sweethearts.

One alert agent, talking to one of the girls, a waitress in a local restaurant, discovered one of her "gentlemen friends" was a blond. He asked to see the man's picture.

The man in the picture bore a striking resemblance in many ways to Blondy—but wasn't the right Blondy. Instead, he was a hoodlum who when picked up, denied taking part in the robbery. The man who had accused Blondy couldn't identify the hoodlum, but he persisted in his identification of Blondy.

FBI agents kept digging. Finally the hoodlum could no longer logically

continue his denials. He confessed and aided the FBI in locating a sports shirt worn by another participant in the robbery who had hidden the shirt because it bore bloodstains from the beating of the caretaker.

Hoover recalls Blondy's surprise when told that he was free-cleared by the FBI:

"He seemed amazed. He couldn't understand why, in view of his record, the FBI had worked so diligently to prove his innocence in the robbery. Informed that he was cleared of all charges and could go about his way unmolested, Blondy shook his head in bewilderment, raised his right hand and announced: 'Honest to Pete, Mister, this is the last time I'm getting on the wrong side of the law.'"

FBI investigators are not prejudiced by a suspect's past behavior, whether criminal or exemplary. A West Virginia farmhand was found shot in the leg. He told police someone shot him from a distance.

Near by lived a man who only recently had been released from prison, where he had been sent for stealing cattle owned by the wounded man's employer. The ex-convict, local citizens logically reasoned, had a motive. He became Suspect Number One.

FBI ballistics experts by powder-burn patterns proved the shot wounding the farmhand had been fired at close contact with the body. Faced with this evidence, the farmhand confessed that, fearing dismissal, he had shot himself in an attempt to gain his employer's sympathy. The neighboring ex-convict, "going straight," slept better that night, thanks to the FBI.

Sometimes a person is arrested, tried, convicted, sentenced to prison, and serves his time—before the FBI has occasion to become active in the case and establish his innocence.

Such was the fortune of Bertram M. Campbell, a Wall Street securities salesman. He was erroneously identified in New York State courts as the elusive "Mr. X," who for thirteen years had plagued police, bank investigators and private detectives by obtaining sums ranging from $1,000 to $8,000 in periodic forgeries.

Although Campbell vigorously protested his innocence, he was sentenced to from five to ten years in Sing Sing Prison. He was paroled after serving three years and four months.

Shortly thereafter, the FBI questioned another man, Alexander D. L. Thiel, who bore an unbelievable resemblance to Campbell.

Special agents investigated Thiel, turned up mountainous evidence against him—and confronted him with it. So detailed and thorough were the indisputable facts that Thiel dropped his jaw, settled back in his chair and began:

"I see what you mean, boys. I guess you've got me pretty well catalogued. I was convinced you didn't have anything on me, and I had made up my mind to say nothing. Now, I think the best thing for me to do is to give you the whole story. . ."

His recital covered a long string of admitted forgeries, including those wrongfully attributed to Campbell.

New York State issued a full pardon to the grievously injured Campbell, and awarded him $115,000 for the humiliation and loss of liberty his unjust conviction had cost him.

Campbell died from a stroke not long after obtaining his exoneration. He might have lived the remainder of his life under the undeserved stigma, and bequeathed the disgrace to his family, if it had not been for the identification of the real culprit by the FBI.

There is no way to determine the number of persons now in prison who would not be there if the FBI had had jurisdiction of their cases, or if the Bureau's forces in some way had been active in their investigations.

CREATED July 26, 1908, with only a handful of bank examiners and Secret Service agents borrowed from the U. S. Treasury Department and a few other agencies, the FBI now has more than 4,000 specially trained investigators operating out of fifty-two field offices situated in the continental United States, Puerto Rico, Alaska and Hawaii.

The Bureau is charged with the investigation of more than 120 Federal laws, ranging from bank robbery and white slavery to espionage and national security.

When a local police department sends evidence to the FBI, with a request for analysis, frequently within an hour after its receipt complete reports are on the way back to the original source—to clear an innocent person.

The Bureau's scientists, given a stray strand of hair, can determine whether it is of animal or human origin. If animal, they can name the animal and give an assortment of interesting information about it.

If the hair is human in origin, they can provide from its study astounding facts about the person from whom it came—sometimes even the geographical-racial origin of the person.

Additional characteristics of the tiny filament under study will reveal to the examiners whether the person's hair was naturally or artificially curly; if the person's hair has been dyed, they can state its former color; and they can tell from which part of the body the single hair came.

These delicate hair tests proved important to a man in Arkansas, accused of raiding his neighbor's chicken-house. A single strand of hair had been found on one of the remaining hens.

Tests showed the hair was from an animal. Further examination disclosed the animal was a dog. A dog

Illustrated by JOHN McDERMOTT

An accused man protested that a message which would clear him had been written on this flame-ravaged paper.

When the caretaker resisted, the gang pistol-whipped him into submission, and fled with two safes.

with blood on its neck was found in the neighborhood where the chickens had been disappearing. The patch of hair bearing the blood specimen was snipped from the dog and sent to the technical laboratory. The blood was proved to be from a chicken; the hair on which it had fallen proved to be the same as the original strand found on one of the unstolen chickens. The suspected chicken-thief was cleared.

The laboratory's up-to-date records are so inclusive they defy mention of an overlooked subject.

The fingerprint files contain more than 115,000,000 prints, criminal and noncriminal, and dozens of new prints are added to the collection every hour of every day.

There are files of palmprints of persons without fingers, and footprints of those without hands.

There's a file of general appearances of known criminals, and another listing 568,145 nicknames of known lawbreakers.

Other files contain information on criminals' hobbies, hangouts, friends, weaknesses, preferences for food, liquor, women, cigarettes, and other personal data useful in identifications.

Supplementing these dossiers on individuals are files on almost every subject conceivable—ropes and twines, bullets and cartridges and guns, auto-tire impressions, tool- and teeth-marks, bombs and explosives, metals, plastics, woods, adhesive tapes, typewriters, check-writing machines and other mechanical writing devices, leaves, berries, bark, locks, dynamite wrappers and blasting caps and fuses, rubber stamps, writing- and wrapping-papers, handprinting and handwriting, auto parts, North American trees, botanical varieties, and others.

The collection of ammunitions consists of 1,839 different kinds, arranged according to caliber, weight and design, with lists of manufacturers and sellers of each type.

Another collection includes 350 different guns, mostly sidearms of the types commonly used by criminals. This collection makes readily available almost any type gun for conducting tests, generally to determine the powder-residue patterns resulting at varying distances following discharge of weapons.

In addition to the actual guns there are on file, for ready reference, fired test specimens from all those weapons, as well as from a number of rarer types of guns not so frequently used. These number about 550 specimens and comprehensively cover the field of modern small arms.

Strengthening this collection is a file of the engineering specifications of the various firearms manufacturers, both in this country and abroad, setting forth the essential data concerning each model of firearm.

Also maintained, with the assistance of the Customs Service of the Treasury Department, is a file on all firearms currently imported into the United States. . . .

The National Fraudulent Check File, increased by receipt of approximately one thousand new phony checks a month, often produces an immediate identification of the real signer of a spurious check—and the release of an innocent person accused of signing it.

The National Automobile Paint File, with specimens of paint used by auto manufacturers, enables investigators with only a tiny chip of paint

from a hit-run vehicle to know instantly the make and model of the wanted car—often freeing a suspect whose auto is of a different category.

All these collections, plus an abundance of others, are so catalogued that any one file may be pulled out with push-button swiftness and examined without delay. All are used daily in proving the innocence of persons wrongfully accused of crimes.

Not long ago a man loitering in a bank suddenly threw away an apple he had been eating, whipped out a gun and stuck up the bank's teller. He fled without witnesses having obtained a good look at him.

Suspicion centered on a certain bystander, who was actually innocent.

The discarded half-eaten apple was sent to the FBI laboratory. The file on teethmarks was yanked out and checked against the dental impressions on the apple. This resulted in the arrest of the guilty bandit—and the clearing of the suspected innocent bystander.

In document examinations, FBI technicians work veritable wonders, bringing to life and readability faded, erased and altered writings and printings.

The examiners can and do determine the approximate ages of papers and inks, proving certain documents were prepared before the birth of the person accused of writing them, or establishing other facts which liberate persons unjustly detained.

Countless innocent persons have been absolved of crimes through the ingenious efforts of the laboratory document-division's examiners.

Recently an entire new phase of operations devoted to establishing innocence opened for the FBI. Under the Federal Employees' Program, it became necessary to verify or refute charges reflecting upon the patriotism and integrity of Government workers.

Of the first 2,500,000 persons whose loyalty was challenged, the FBI cleared 2,415,000, or 99.6 per cent of the total.

As the probe continued, the number of those examined for possible disloyalty mounted to 3,255,000—and the FBI cleared 3,210,516 of them!

In numerous instances Communist Party petitions were turned up bearing the names of Federal employees, and FBI handwriting experts proved the signatures were forged, or were written by persons not Government workers but with identical names and living in the same localities as the suspected loyal citizens.

On one occasion, a Federal employee with most unusual first and last names was threatened with national disgrace, loss of his job and patriotic American friends, when his identification turned up on a Communist Party petition circulated in New York City.

The FBI proved the real signer of this petition was a deaf-mute who actually had the same first and last names, plus the same middle initial, as the conscientious Federal employee —although the two men were not at all related.

The Government worker retained his position, prestige and self-respect.

A technical employee of the U.S. Navy was identified by a thoroughly reliable confidential informant of the FBI as a former member of the Communist Party. The FBI checked, and verified the report. It also established an understandable reason for the membership. This Federal employee, while a member of a local union a few years before, had joined the Communist Party, along with another union member, for the sole purpose of "getting inside information" necessary to combat a Communist bid for control of the union.

A similar case was that of a man reported to the FBI as having attended many "front" organization meetings. The FBI also verified this report.

It also established why: The man involved had been attending the Leftist meetings as an undercover investigator for a State agency!

The FBI's investigation cleared this man, and hundreds of others whose "association" with Communist groups had not been in line with the Communist Party's avowed goal to destroy the American Government by force and violence.

"The FBI is constantly on guard against vicious, malicious misinformation," Hoover states, "and is devoted to developing the true facts.

"The Bureau's motto, derived from the initial letters of its name, is 'Fidelity, Bravery and Integrity.' Our investigators have demonstrated by their determination to develop *all* the facts with complete objectivity that this motto's third ingredient, 'Integrity,' is no means least, just because it is last.

"It stands as a bulwark for the innocent against erroneous inferences, innuendo and spite quite as much as it serves as an arm of justice in bringing the guilty to account."

Just as vicious persons sometimes attempt to frame innocent individuals into criminal entanglements, they also frequently "inform" against stanch patriots, whispering malicious lies of treason to authorities.

In one loyalty investigation, the FBI's source of information was another Government agency of unquestionable reliability. But the FBI was not content with second-hand information when a first-hand check could be made.

Special agents traced the information to its original source. The trail led to an unscrupulous man who selected names from newspapers, filled out their identifications on blank Communist Party membership cards which he had somehow managed to obtain. Then he would see that these explosive cards infiltrated various State and Federal agencies.

Needless to say, the operator was promptly put out of business by the FBI.

Speaking of the FBI's endless work in bringing about the exoneration of persons wrongfully accused of crime, Hoover states:

"We in the FBI cannot but feel a natural, human satisfaction in the knowledge that the facts developed by our investigators have in so many instances removed suspicion from someone suspected of a crime, or from a Federal applicant or employee whose loyalty was questioned.

"Such accomplishments appeal to the American love of fair play embodied in the preference that ten guilty men escape retribution rather than that one innocent man suffer unjustly. This concept, foreign to alien philosophies, which subordinate individual human rights, is the keystone in the arch of American justice."

FLAK

South Korea has one of the world's largest deposits of tungsten, an important war matériel.

Arthur, the son of Gen. Douglas MacArthur was born in the Philippines in 1938, and had never been in the United States until this year.

The chaplain of the Maidstone, England post of the British Legion has resigned because members included "Mademoiselle from Armentieres" in their social singing.

Some historians contend that the Iroquois Indians, who held sway from Hudson Bay to North Carolina and from Connecticut to the Mississippi, conquered more territory than the ancient Romans.

U. S. Marines were in China as far back as 1854, when they were sent there to protect the lives of Americans and other foreigners.

—by Harold Helfer

FACTS—about WATCHES

by JOHN DUNLAVY

STRICTLY speaking, there are only three American-made watches. Other movements are made either partly or entirely in Switzerland. Swiss uncased movements brought into the U. S. provide the basis for a $322 million annual business for more than one hundred U. S. firms. Despite this, Switzerland buys considerably more in the U. S. than she sells—almost $80 million annually.

WATCH movements are classified into four groups: premier or first quality, second quality, third quality and fourth quality. Watch experts classify only three watches in the premier group, the determining factor being the skill of the watchmaker in making the parts and assembling the movement, rather than the quality of the raw materials. All three premier watches have hand-fitted parts.

THE number of jewels in a watch is not necessarily the principal measure for judging quality. Rather, it is the cut, polish, set and exactness of the jewels. Jewels serve only to reduce friction, and because most jewels are synthetic rubies, they are worth next to nothing in themselves. The number varies from five to twenty-three, but most watchmakers agree that ordinary watches need no more than 15, the finest watches no more than seventeen jewels. A seventeen-jewel watch will not necessarily keep better time than a seven-jewel watch, but it should last longer.

WE'VE all seen the painted watches that hang outside so many jewelry stores. The hands invariably read 8:18. Rumor has insisted for years that this was the hour that Lincoln was shot. In reality, Lincoln did not arrive at Ford's Theater until after 8:30. The hands are set at this hour while a watch is in an upright position so that an over-all effect of balance and symmetry may be achieved. Watches displayed in a prone position are most often set at twenty-five minutes to eleven. Both of these positions reveal a maximum of the dial area and do not obscure the maker's name.

THE *tick-tick* you hear in your watch comes from the power control unit, which is the heart of the watch. In a jeweled-lever movement tiny gems regulate this power and the tick is hard to hear. In a less expensive watch with a pin-lever movement, steel strikes against steel, creating a louder tick. The tiny jeweled-lever mechanism ticks five times a second, 432,000 times a day.

ALTHOUGH the first American-made automatic watch is scheduled to make its appearance in 1951, the first Swiss automatic was made for Marie Antoinette over 150 years ago. It was necessary for the wearer to take a fifteen-minute walk to wind it fully. Automatics now have reserve power indicators and can be made in round or rectangular cases. Automatics wind themselves by means of a small bar that slides back and forth around the movement in your case with the motion of your arm. A device prevents overwinding.

A WATCH can be used as a compass when you are lost. If you lay the watch down with its face upward and point the hour hand toward the sun, South will lie in the direction halfway between the hour hand and the figure twelve, counting backward in the afternoon, forward as the hands turn in the morning hours. The reason is simple: the hour hand moves around the dial just twice as fast as the sun moves around the sky, making a full circle in twelve hours while the sun makes its half circle from horizon to horizon. Try it sometime. It may come in handy.

THE word *"watch"* is believed to have been derived from the early Anglo-Saxon word *"wecche,"* meaning to alarm or awaken, which comes from the German word *"wachen,"* meaning to wake.

IT takes about 2,400-odd distinct operations to make a good watch. Every one of these must be checked and double checked. Its manufacture requires precision to one-thousandth of a millimeter, one-fiftieth of the thickness of a hair.

A GOOD watch has about 180 parts of which the smallest looks like a speck of dust to the naked eye. Actually, it is a tiny screw, threaded and finely polished. It measures four-thousandths of an inch in diameter, and fifty thousand of them will fit into an ordinary thimble.

IT takes fifty different types of machines to construct a watch and up to 1,650 hand operations alone. It takes six weeks just to time a fine watch.

THE hands of your watch do not move steadily, but in tiny jumps. A "train" of little wheels pushes the balance wheel as a result of pressure brought by the wound mainspring; the balance wheel pushes the hairspring; the hairspring tightens and pushes the balance wheel back against the train, regulating its speed. This complete circle of vibrating parts must be perfectly adjusted, because in vibrating eighteen thousand times an hour, the variation of one-ten-thousandth part of a second with each oscillation would put your watch off forty-three seconds a day.

IT's best to wind a watch in the morning. Your habits are then most regular and this permits your watch to be wound when it is most needed. Most watches will run between 28 and 36 hours without rewinding, but performance varies when a spring is almost rundown. Contrary to popular belief, it does not hurt to turn the hands of a watch backward.

GOOD wrist watches are adjusted so that they will run uniformly in three positions: face up, end up, and stem down. These positions correspond to the position of the watch when the hand is held straight out, palm down; when the hand is held out, palm vertical; when the hand is at the side.

DURING World War II, a timepiece was developed for parachute jumpers. After the proper number of seconds had elapsed after the jumper had left the plane, a small knife sprang out and cut the ripcord, releasing the parachute. This watch was credited with saving the lives of a number of airmen who were injured as they left their planes.

WATERPROOF watches, under FTC rules must be able to withstand a pressure of thirty-five pounds per square inch under water for at least five minutes. "Water-resistant" watches have to meet lower requirements of a similar nature.

O'Ryan Meets the

AT dawn of a June day in the year eighteen hundred and four, two midshipmen stood on the forecastle of the United States frigate *Columbia* and turned glum faces toward the early morning light. As a rule sunrise on a warm summer day finds the harbor of Palermo, in Sicily, as pleasant a spot as one could wish. To the eastward, toward Italy, the black curtain draws away. A horizon appears and the sea shows itself as a sheet of gray steel that changes swiftly through purple, to pink, to an azure carpet flecked with white. Behind the town the hills take a golden cast and slowly the groves of olives are bathed in warmth and sunshine.

All of this beauty was lost on Midshipmen Tom Craven and Michael O'Ryan. For two hours they had discussed, planned, argued and conspired, but with the coming of day they were no nearer a solution of the problem than they had been at midnight when they learned of the latest outrage perpetrated by Captain Bertram, commanding His Britannic Majesty's ship of the line *Maidstone*, which swung to her anchor near by.

"Beast" Bertram was a bad egg in anyone's language; hated by his crew, feared by his officers, known throughout the navies of the world as a fit successor to Bligh of the *Bounty*. Every nation has a Bertram or two, narrow, provincial individuals, holding all foreigners in indiscriminate loathing; loud, blatant men who besmirch their country's name out of all proportion to their worth. . . .

A few weeks earlier, when the *Columbia* was at Gibraltar refitting after a stormy Atlantic passage, Admiral Joyce-Kimball brought up the name of Bertram in conversation with Captain Browning of the American frigate. "If you're going aloft," he said, using the expression which means bound to the eastward in the Mediterranean, "if you're going aloft, Browning, you might chance to run into Bertram, of the *Maidstone*. A good fighter but a terrific ass. Suggest you give him a wide berth."

"I know him by reputation," Captain Browning replied. "But I see no reason why Bertram and I should quarrel. Your fleets are busy enough with Napoleon's navy, and I've a job on my hands with those damned marauding pirates of the Barbary Coast. And I doubt if even Bertram would be so indiscreet as to disregard your orders against impressing men from American merchantmen unless they are bona-fide deserters from your navy."

"I hope you're right," said the Admiral. "A thousand men from my squadron can walk quietly through the streets of Gibraltar and go unnoticed. But let one drunken sailor stagger across the plaza, and everyone says: 'Look at him! There's the Navy, for you!' It's the same with Bertram. He gives us a bad name wherever he goes. Some day he'll overstep and receive his comeuppance. At the moment we need every good fighter we can find, and Bertram's a jolly good man in a scrap.

"Now," the Admiral continued, "let us drink a toast to the downfall of the barbarous Moor—and eternal peace between our two countries."

"Most gladly, sir," Captain Browning replied. "And to you—a safe and speedy return home."

Arriving at Palermo, the Captain and his second in command, Lieutenant Porter, had gone immediately to the mountains to seek out the King of

Press Gang

America and Britain stand shoulder to shoulder against our enemies—but like other close relatives, we have sometimes fought bitterly.

by
FREDERICK J. BELL
REAR ADMIRAL, U.S.N., RET.

Sicily at his summer palace and lay before him a request that American warships might receive supplies in the port of Syracuse to aid them in the war with the countries of north Africa that were demanding tribute for permitting American commerce to pass their shores.

So Lieutenant Littlewale was the senior officer in the *Columbia* on that fateful morning when the *Maidstone* swept in from her blockading station—to land her sick and obtain wood and water, so Captain Bertram announced, but actually to send armed gangs on shore each evening to comb the waterfront taverns for men, and any man, regardless of nationality, so long as he had two hands and two feet, was fair prey for Beast Bertram's press gang.

WHEN an American schooner lost six of her crew to the midnight raiders, Lieutenant Littlewale went aboard the *Maidstone* to lodge a protest. Captain Bertram allowed him to cool his heels on the quarterdeck for thirty minutes before receiving him in the cabin, where poor Littlewale met short shrift. "Are you attempting to instruct me in the conduct of my affairs?" Beast Bertram demanded.

"I am not, sir," replied the American lieutenant. "I desire merely to point out that your Admiral Joyce-Kimball gave assurances to Captain Browning that American seamen would not be pressed into the British Navy; that our flag would be respected."

An icy gleam appeared in Bertram's eye, and he rose to signify that the brief interview was at a close. "The men were in an American schooner, but that does not make them American. I dare say they are English or Irish—deserters, most likely. And may I remind you, sir, that Admiral Joyce-Kimball is at Gibraltar. In this port I am the law of His Majesty's Navy. My impressment detail will doubtless find more dockside scum. I need them, and I will take them. Don't waste your time, or mine, by discussing the matter further."

It might have been different if Captain Browning, or even Mr. Porter, had been there, but they were still at the palace of the King of Sicily, and although Lieutenant Littlewale sent a messenger, post haste, it was doubtful if they could return before the *Maidstone* sailed.

Impressing American merchant seamen was bad enough, but the previous evening Beast Bertram, as though to flaunt his power and his contempt, had permitted his press gang to take four of the *Columbia's* own men, including Peter Kinney, the tough little captain of the foretop and the best gun pointer in Midshipman O'Ryan's division. O'Ryan was for instant action, but Tom Craven spoke feelingly and sensibly when he advised that they wait, in hope that the Captain might return in time.

THIS was the subject that they had argued throughout the morning watch; O'Ryan angry, running nervous fingers through his sandy hair, while Tom leaned against a gun carriage and pleaded for moderation. "What," he asked, "can two midshipmen hope to accomplish against a British seventy-four-gun ship-of-the-line?"

As he spoke, his eye was drawn to the *Maidstone,* her high-walled side, pierced with three long lines of gun ports, rising in the dawn like the granite face of a fortress; masts towering until their trucks seemed to pierce the sky. She was beautiful, and strong, and dangerous. Beyond her a schooner raced toward the shelter of the harbor, an American, by the cut of her jib—more fodder for the press gang.

"We've got to get aboard the *Maidstone,*" said O'Ryan, slowly. "We can't sneak aboard—too many armed guards; nor can we walk up the gangway and say we are two American midshipmen come to demand the release of our men." He paused. "So-o we let the press gang take us."

"We *what?*"

"Listen!" Tom emphasized his points by pounding with the flat of his hands on the breech of the gun. "The press gang take us; we get aboard; we find Kinney—if we're lucky. What then? We can't get off the ship with him, so all three of us get to serve in the Limey navy. No sir!" He thumped the rounded top of the cannon and his finger caught in the touchhole through which powder was poured when loading the gun.

O'Ryan watched Tom free his finger and rub the bruised knuckle. He grinned. "I think I see what we can do," he said slowly.

At nine o'clock that evening the two midshipmen, dressed in the white trousers and short blue jackets of sailors, sat at a table in the common room of the Fouled Anchor, drinking mulled cider from great earthenware mugs, watching the flames play in the fireplace and listening to the rain beat against the windows. It was a cozy place, but neither could feel at ease for thinking of what the night might bring. A single slip in their plans and they would find themselves shipped before the mast on a British warship outward bound.

It was not a pleasant prospect, and Craven confessed to harboring the thought, if not the wish, that the crew of the recently arrived schooner might be held on board; that perhaps the captain would learn of the press gang menace and prevent his men from going on shore.

But any doubts in his mind were quickly dispelled when the door burst open with a clatter that shook the rafters, and a half-dozen rain-soaked merchant seamen tumbled into the room, shouting for rum and raising their voices in snatches of song. They caught up the two boys in their midst and ordered the glasses filled all around.

One of them slapped Tom on the back in friendly fashion. A look of surprise came over his face and he inspected his hand carefully. Small wonder, for Tom had spent an hour sewing headless nails into the collar of his seaman frock and around the hem of his trousers. The man must have thought he had a backbone of iron, for he measured his size with a new respect in his eye, and refrained from further back-slapping.

Between gulps of fiery hot rum they made known that their ship, the *Patrick Henry*, of Norfolk, was homeward bound after a voyage that would put money in every man's pocket. Had they noticed the British warship in the harbor? Yes, they'd seen old Blood and Bones, and blast him for ruining an honest trader's prospects. What with war on every hand a man never knew where his voyage would end. The midshipmen nodded in agreement and raised their glasses to peace, and the American Navy. It was close to midnight. The rain pounded against the windows and beat with steady tones on the tiled roof of the inn. A boy threw fresh logs on the fire and in the sudden upsurge of flame the room was brilliantly lighted.

O'Ryan grasped Tom's arm urgently. "Look!" he whispered.

Tom followed his gaze and saw a figure pull back from the window into the shadow—and the glint of light on a drawn cutlass.

"Pr-ress gang! Your men—they put up ver' beeg fight!"

Illustrated by RAYMOND SISLEY

"Stand by," said O'Ryan in low tones. "And remember, not too much resistance."

Tom nodded and tried to appear unconcerned, but now that action was imminent, he had a funny tightness in the pit of his stomach; his heart pounded like a loose sail-block in a gale, and at the moment he would have given much to have been snug in his hammock aboard the *Columbia.*

He glanced at the merchant sailors, but they had noticed nothing amiss. Another shadow darted by the window. The trap was being set.

It happened quickly. The door was flung open, and a voice bellowed: "In the King's name!" Then the room was full of red-coated British marines and pandemonium broke loose.

There was a cry from the merchant sailors—"T'row the lobster backs out!"

Under a shower of heavy mugs the enemy retreated; then cutlasses commenced to flash, and the Americans were backed slowly against the wall. Gone long since was the resolve to submit peaceably. O'Ryan, waving a heavy stool, battered three men to the floor before he went down in an avalanche of blows. Tom fought his way toward him, fists flailing, and for an instant the British gave way before the very fury of his onslaught. Then the wave closed in on Tom; his arms were pinned from behind and he was thrust roughly through the doorway and into the night and shoved over the wet cobbles with the other captives, toward the docks and the *Maidstone's* waiting boat.

If the British had delayed their sortie for another five minutes, Tom might have felt more encouraged with his prospects. As it was, the two horsemen drew up to the inn so close on the heels of the press gang that the small group of spectators had not yet dispersed.

"There seems to have been a riot, Mr. Porter," said the tall man, as he swung from his saddle in a manner indicating he was happy to have completed a painful and unaccustomed experience.

"Pr-ress gang!" The fat innkeeper spat out the words as if they were poison to his tongue. "Your men—they put up ver' beeg fight!" he confided in a tone of rueful satisfaction.

"My men!"

The innkeeper's voluble explanation was cut short by an abrupt gesture from his listener. "A boat, Mr. Porter! We will go on board at once."

So it was that at about the same time the press gang and their victims arrived alongside the *Maidstone,* a mightily surprised young officer of the *Columbia* received his Captain and First Lieutenant as they swung

The drowsy brig sentry heard a soft step behind him. Then—

"The Columbia *is in an excellent position for raking—before you could bring your guns to bear."*

up the ladder and onto the quarterdeck.

Mr. Porter paused to issue brief commands, while wind whipped across the deck and scattered the remnants of rain that fell from the rigging and the shadowy bunts of the ghostly sails overhead.

"Call all hands," he ordered, "—and no noise. The gunner is to serve out powder as soon as the gun-crews are ready; have the boatswain make preparations for slipping the cable, and be ready to let go a stern anchor."

O'Ryan opened his eyes and stirred feebly; painfully. His head felt like ten thousand red-hot needles. For a moment he lay there, staring into the darkness, then recollection flooded over him and he knew that he was aboard the *Maidstone*. Well, that was where he had planned to be, but not exactly in this fashion. He managed a wry grin at the thought of his caution to Tom Craven that they must not resist too strongly. Where was Tom now, he wondered. He attempted to sit up, but the effort was too much and he sank back to the deck. How long he had lain there he did not know. He came to as a sinewy arm caught him around the shoulders and a cup was pressed to his lips.

"Here, sir, drink some of this." The welcome voice of Peter Kinney broke like a cool waterfall over the parched heat of O'Ryan's muddled thoughts. "Faith, and I thought you was a goner, sir, when I seen 'em bring you aboard, you was that covered with blood—and Mr. Craven a-fightin' and a-thrashin' about."

Whatever was in the cup was just what he needed. He pulled himself together and his mind once more began to function properly. "There's much to be done, Kinney. First we must find Mr. Craven. Then—"

"Mr. Craven's in the brig," Kinney began hesitatingly.

"We'll have to get him out," said O'Ryan in as firm a voice as he could manage. He struggled to his feet and grasped Kinney's arm for support. "I guess they thought I was too far gone to give them any trouble tonight. Here—you lead the way."

During the day the gun-deck was a place of action with poundings and noise from cooper, carpenter and blacksmith—and mixed smells from the black galley stove. But at this hour of the night it was untenanted, for the officers lived aft, and the crew swung their hammocks on the crowded berth deck below.

Once they spied the pale rays of a lantern as a master-at-arms made his solitary tour of inspection; they crept quickly back into the shadow of the guns and waited there, scarcely daring to breathe until he had passed. As they slid by a door O'Ryan sniffed the fresh clean odor of lumber and came to an abrupt halt.

"Carpenter shop," said Kinney, and turned to go ahead.

"Wait," ordered O'Ryan. He felt with outstretched hands along the bulkhead, running his fingers lightly over the tools that ranged in neat man-of-war fashion along the walls until he found what he wanted. "Rawhide mallets," he explained briefly, handing one of them to Kinney. "We'll need them—if it's not too late."

"I was figuring on using a knife to take care of that brig sentry," murmured Kinney in a disappointed tone.

"No," whispered O'Ryan. "We want no more bloodshed, and the mallets are for—other things."

The brig sentry, drowsy and half draped over his musket, heard a soft step behind him. Then his gun was seized by ready hands and he was trussed and gagged—with his own cross-belts, he realized sorrowfully.

From the open brig came fragments of swift orders in a low tone: "Cut him loose. Here, Kinney—give me that knife—now the collar—catch the nails. Take a handful, and the mallet. You ready?"

The three figures crept into the semi-darkness and faded from view in the shadows of the cumbrous gun carriages that flanked the deck on both sides of the ship.

An hour later and two levels above the brig, in the gray light of early morning the officer-of-the-deck gave startled attention as the *Columbia* broke from her moorings and rode with the tide. She drifted rapidly, yawing from side to side, with her bow falling off in one direction and then another, carried along before the combined effect of wind squalls and flooding waters.

Swiftly she bore down on the British ship. Figures could be seen running about her decks, seemingly in great confusion. She was now a scant hundred yards off—sweeping down broadside to, in a fair position to fall athwart the British ship, whose slender bowsprit already was about to thrust its tip into the mainsail of the runaway frigate. Then, when collision was a certainty, the American ship slowed and stopped, held by anchors bow and stern on the downstream side—away from the *Maidstone*—so that she presented her broadside to the British ship. The small group of English officers on the quarterdeck were relieved at the last-minute success of the *Columbia* in halting her mad dash, and when they saw a gig lowered on the lee side, they felt confident that the American captain was coming on board the *Maidstone* to make his apologies for the unseamanlike handling of his ship.

Captain Browning mounted the accommodation ladder, curtly acknowledged the salute of the officer-of-the-deck, and demanded to see the commanding officer. The captain was dressing? Very well, thank you, he would wait on deck.

In a few minutes Captain Bertram, his gold lace hat securely fixed atop a shiny wig on which every hair was in place, stepped from his cabin, paused to brush an imaginary speck of dust from a spotless broadcloth sleeve, and sauntered toward the American captain, hand outstretched in languid greeting. "My dear fellow, you could have sent one of your officers to apologize. It was not necessary for you to take the trouble. Cable parted—apt to happen to anyone."

Captain Browning straightened. "I do not think you—"

"Now, now, I'll hear no more," Bertram said, smiling indulgently, "but you *are* riding uncomfortably close athwart my bow. If—uh—your cable should carry away again, you could scarcely avoid damaging my ship."

"I have placed the *Columbia* across your bow in order that there may be no misunderstanding of my intentions," Captain Browning said quietly. "I find that your officers, not content with taking my countrymen from merchant vessels, have had the temerity to press at least four men from my ship—possibly more."

"I see," said Bertram, his face darkening, "and do you not know, sir, that all is fair in war?"

"I was not aware, Captain, that our countries were at war."

"England is at war, sir, and I know of no reason why I should treat Americans differently from Spaniards, or Portuguese or others whom I might need for my crew."

"I take it, then, that you refuse to give up my men," said Captain Browning mildly.

"That is correct, sir, and I will thank you to remove your ship from across my bow without delay."

A cold gleam appeared in Captain Browning's eye. "Very well. I now make formal demand for the release of *every American* who has been pressed into your ship—and if they are not produced within five minutes, my first lieutenant has orders to open fire. . . . As you can see," he continued, with a chill smile, "the *Columbia* is in an excellent position for raking, and I fancy she could knock you about before you could bring your guns to bear."

"You wouldn't dare!" said the Englishman, in dismay, and then blundered along in startled surprise: "A frigate against a ship-of-the-line—and in a neutral port—"

"As you have reminded me, sir," said Captain Browning, "all is fair in war." Nevertheless, he hoped that his face did not reflect the disquietude that he felt. Despite the strategic location of the *Columbia* there was a limit to the damage that could be done to the English ship. He could bring down her masts, carry away her rigging; clear her upper decks—keep her in port two weeks, repairing damages; but her solid timbers would remain unpierced, and the *Maidstone*, in less time than it takes to tell, could let go a stern anchor, veer the bow cable and bring the overpowering weight of her broadside to bear on the American frigate.

Furious, momentarily baffled at the audacity of the American commander, Beast Bertram waited an instant too long. A wave of figures rolled up the ladder and thundered across the quarterdeck; the gunner of the *Maidstone*, running, in the lead, and close on his heels, a squad of marines with O'Ryan, Craven and Kinney in their grasp.

"One of my men," said Captain Browning, catching sight of Kinney. He shot a quick glance at the other two captives—dirty, disheveled, splattered with scarlet stains. There was something familiar about them. He looked again—an amazed recognition dawned in his eyes. "Those others are my officers.. What—"

But Captain Bertram was not listening. The gunner, shaking with fury, was shouting in his ear—making violent gestures, and waving a handful of nails before his suddenly be-

wildered gaze. There was an abrupt change in the atmosphere. The English captain seemed to pale and shrink closer within the blue cloth of his uniform. He looked over his shoulder at the *Columbia* riding there across his hawse, then he turned to Captain Browning. "I am afraid, sir," he said in a strangled voice, "that my impressment detail have been unduly active. By all means, sir, take your men and any other Americans who have been coërced into joining my crew."

On the return trip to the *Columbia* Captain Browning was strangely perplexed, unable to understand the sudden about-face on the part of the English. Why should the sight of the two midshipmen have caused the arrogant Bertram to give in so abruptly? At the thought of the midshipmen his face flushed with anger, and he eyed his young officers with chill displeasure. "I suppose, Mr. O'Ryan," he said, "that you and Mr. Craven are prepared to account for your absence from the ship last evening?"

They looked at each other in quick dismay; then O'Ryan answered. "But I—I explained it all in my letter, sir. I left it to be delivered to the acting commander."

The Captain's voice was icy. "I know of no letter."

O'Ryan looked at him through eyes that shone with admiration. "And you brought the *Columbia* down anyway, sir; you—you were going to fight a ship-of-the-line!"

The Captain, lips compressed, made no reply.

"You see, sir," Tom broke in quietly, "Mr. O'Ryan had the idea that if we could put the *Maidstone* out of action in some way, then the *Columbia* could threaten to open fire unless they surrendered the Americans. When we saw you do just what we planned we thought of course you knew her guns were spiked, so we—"

"Just a moment," the Captain broke in. "Did I understand you to say that you spiked the guns of the *Maidstone?*"

"Yes sir," Tom replied. "We weren't quite through before we were caught but we pounded soft nails in the touchholes of all the lower deck guns, so she won't be any stronger than a sloop for the better part of a day, until they can drill 'em out. It was the only way we could—"

"Never mind," said the Captain. The corners of his mouth relaxed, and his eyes twinkled. "I will hear the whole story later, in my cabin."

The gig swung under the shadow of the *Columbia's* open gunports and brought up neatly against the gangway.

The Captain stepped onto the grating, then turned and looked down at O'Ryan and Craven, who were circled by the recently freed Americans. "Meanwhile," he said, "I would like you young men to refrain from further private expeditions. We sail for Tripoli on the evening tide."

Kinney, long silent, spoke up from where he was crouched uncomfortably under a thwart. "Tripoli," he grumbled. "I better whet up my cutlass. I heared tell them Mohanidins has skins tougher thin a purser's pig."

THE sun was an hour past the meridian when a British squadron stood in from the westward, the *Audacious* in the lead, wearing the flag of Herbert Joyce-Kimball, Rear Admiral of the Red. Smoke from the gun salutes still hung in the air when Captain Browning went on board to pay his respects and apprise the Admiral of the latest turn of events; but Bertram had been ahead of him and was leaving the flagship as the *Columbia's* gig came alongside.

Joyce-Kimball met the American captain on the quarterdeck and took him by the hand. "I mustn't keep you, for I see that your ship is ready to get under way. Later, when we have more time, I want to hear the entire story. I have already listened to one version of it from Captain Bertram, late of the *Maidstone.*"

"Late of the—" queried Captain Browning. "I don't understand."

Joyce-Kimball looked him in the eye and replied gravely: "As I told you at Gibraltar, we need our fighters, even our Bertrams. But we need the friendship of the United States, and when that is placed in jeopardy by a Bertram, then the Bertram must go. Any man of vision must see that your country has before it a great destiny. It is a wry fact to some of my countrymen, but it is the truth."

The Admiral's lips moved in a faint smile. "It is no pleasure to learn that one of my captains has been outwitted by a brace of midshipmen. You might tell those wild young men that if you mistreat them, I always will have room for them in my squadron."

"I'm afraid your message would bring about an overdose of pride in the steerage," Captain Browning answered. "Nor can I spare them just now, sir. But I think I can safely say that they will not have time to be bored with life during the next few weeks. One frigate against the guns and fleets of Tripoli and Algiers should provide excitement aplenty for even my young fire-eaters." He lifted his hat in salute and descended to his gig. The Bertram episode was closed. Ahead, across the shimmering waters of the Mediterranean, lay the coast of Barbary and the land of the Veiled Prophet. There was a matter of tribute that needed attention.

—THE END

SPORT SPURTS

A well-hit golf ball can travel 120 miles an hour.

* * *

A tailwind doing better than three miles per hour voids any sprint, broad-jump or hurdle record in N.C.A.A. competition.

* * *

A good many people use their favorite ball for years without coming through with a perfect bowling game, but Wilbur Morton of Cleveland turned the trick while using a brand-new ball for the first time.

* * *

During the course of a six-man bowling match, the pin-boy will usually pick up more than twenty-five tons of maple.

* * *

Most baseball men believe that of all big-league records the one that will be hardest to beat is that of Ty Cobb hitting in the .300's for 23 years. Cobb topped A.L. batsmen twelve times. Most successive years, nine.

Harry Covelskie, the great Detroit Tiger pitcher, refused to pitch against his brother Stanley, when he made his first major-league start on the mound for Cleveland.

* * *

Cy Young, Boston and Cleveland flinger, won 511 games . . . or an average of more than twenty-five victories for each of the twenty years he pitched in the majors.

* * *

Reversing the usual procedure, Halifax hockey players climbed into the stands to help quell a fight among spectators over the unpopular decision of a referee. The players were afraid that their wives, who were among the spectators, might be hurt.

* * *

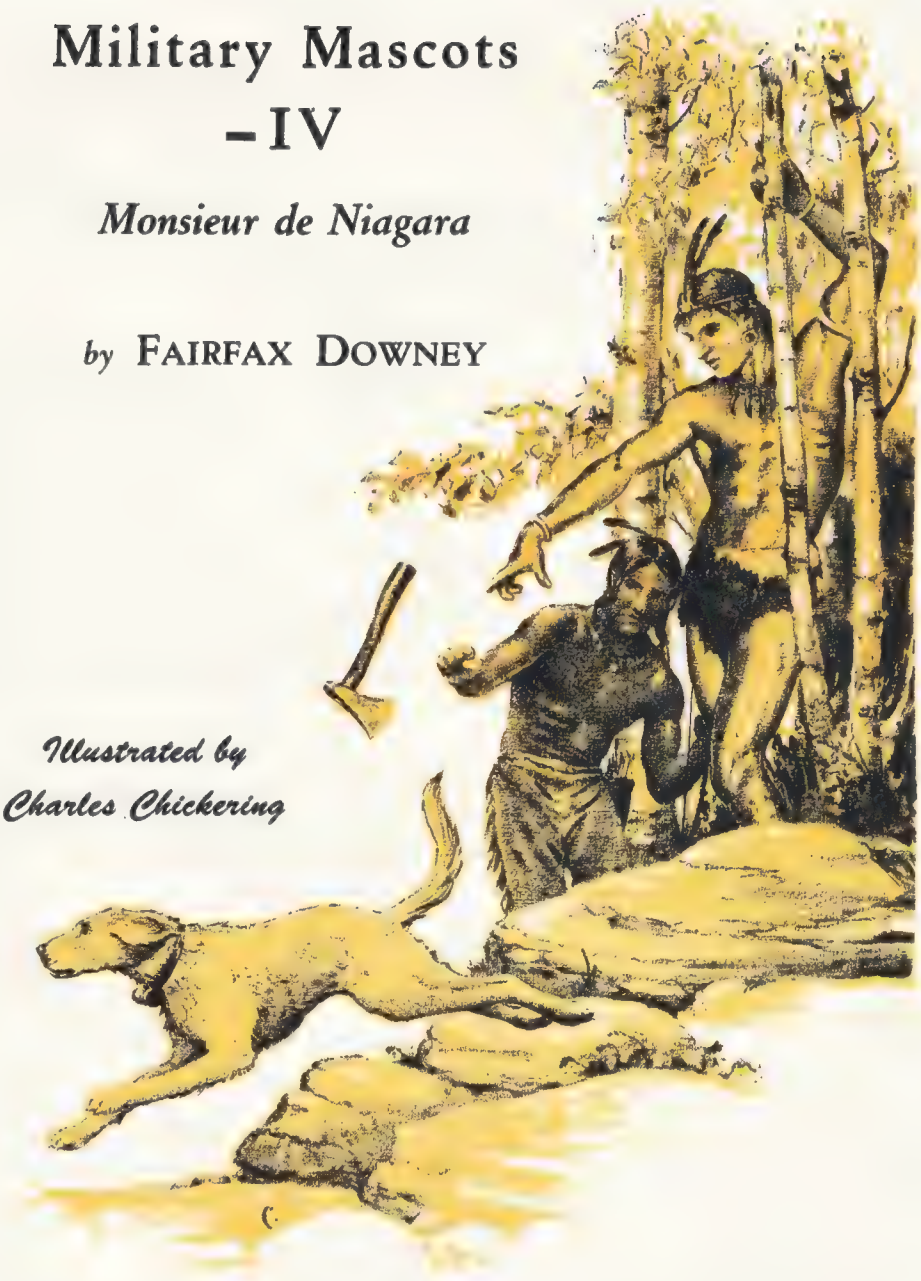
Since Rogers Hornsby's six-year reign as National League batting champion, no other National League hitter has won the crown two years in succession.

—by Harold Helfer

Military Mascots – IV

Monsieur de Niagara

by FAIRFAX DOWNEY



Illustrated by Charles Chickering

MORE than two and a half centuries ago a puppy was born at Fort Niagara in French Canada and named after his birthplace. He became the first North American messenger dog.

His sire, Vingt Sols, belonged to a junior officer of the garrison, Raymond-Blaise des Bergères. Probably the dog was named for his purchase price, twenty coins of the period; and even if that was dear, he was a good bargain, for he was a splendid sentinel. He often stood guard with a soldier on the parapet of the fort's palisade. Iroquois and Senecas infested the woods around the small stronghold on the Niagara River, controlling the passage between Lakes Ontario and Erie. Neither by canoe or through the forest could those savage allies of the English, rivals of France for the rich fur trade, slip up to the walls without betrayal by a warning bark from Vingt Sols.

Monsieur de Niagara, the puppy, grew up to take his father's place when he died, and Des Bergères took the young dog with him when enemy pressure and a high death-rate from scurvy forced the abandonment of Fort Niagara in 1688. The only dog at the new post of Chambly, Monsieur de Niagara was adopted and petted as its mascot. But he became lonely for his own kind, and one day took French leave and ran off through the woods. Instinct told him he might find congenial company at the neighboring fort of La Prairie de la Madelaine a few leagues away, and instinct proved right. At La Prairie, according to his master's journal, he joined the train of a *"chienne chaude."*

Soldiers, recognizing him as the Chambly dog, caught him and took him before the commandant. Monsieur de Niagara might have been accompanying troops from the other stockade, and his arrival alone indicated that the party had been waylaid and wiped out by Indians.

La Prairie was not strong enough to risk a detail to march out and investigate, but the commandant was struck by an inspiration. He wrote a letter of inquiry to Des Bergères and attached it to the dog's collar, fed him, then turned him out of the gate and told him to go home.

The visitor from Chambly, like many another dog before and since, did not care to go home. He liked it where he was. They had to cut switches and drive him away. Looking mournful and reproachful, he loped off through the forest.

Des Bergères welcomed his pet back and read the missive he carried. Here, he perceived, was an unusual and efficient method of communication through hostile territory. Monsieur de Niagara got another meal, and a message was tied to his collar, reporting all was well at Chambly. Threatened again with switches, he was chased out to run back to La Prairie. After a time he was dispatched again on a return trip.

It was a strange business quite beyond Monsieur de Niagara's understanding; but men, his masters, desired it, and the dog obeyed. Back and forth he shuttled between the two isolated forts, bearing messages. Any soldier courier would soon have lost his scalp, and Monsieur de Niagara himself was frequently in danger of ending up in an Iroquois stewpot, but Indian arrows never brought him down. So successful was this *poste à patand*—postal service on the paw—that Des Bergères claimed a ration allowance for the dog from the Intendant at Quebec. It was promptly granted, and Monsieur de Niagara was officially enrolled on the garrison strength. At roll-call he would bark when his name was called. If he were absent, someone would answer for him: *"En course"* or *"A la chasse"—en route* with a message or out hunting.

His name survives in Canadian annals as one of the most famous of dogs which have carried messages for military or civilian masters. Long afterward—in the First and Second World Wars—they would still prove their value and their valor, dashing back and forth between a pair of handlers with vital dispatches under fire.

FOR several years after his death Monsieur de Niagara remained present or accounted for in the garrison. When his name was read out at roll-call, somebody in the ranks would still sound off with *"En course"* or *"A la chasse."* That was partly a tribute to his memory, but it is also undeniably true that hungry soldiers, in New France and elsewhere, can always use an extra ration.

The Army's

For ten years the Counter Intelligence Corps has stood watch and waged silent warfare wherever our Army has been.

A UNIQUE force of soldier spy-hunters is fighting unheralded a battle of brains against hidden dangers that threaten America. It is protecting our military secrets and security from enemy agents, and from disloyal or merely careless Americans. It has saved us thousands of lives and billions of dollars. Yet relatively few people know that this army within our Army exists.

For ten years the Counter Intelligence Corps has stood watch and waged silent warfare wherever our Army has been present—from the ends of the earth to the ends of the earth. During World War II, openly or under cover, the Corps foiled dangerous plots, captured thousands of spies, saboteurs and war criminals. General MacArthur said that CIC shortened the Pacific war by six months. Since 1945 the Corps has guarded and warned the Army and the Government against the lurking dangers of cold war. And in May 1950 it gave warning that the North Koreans would invade South Korea in June.

Today, when our security is threatened by spies more numerous and dangerous than ever before in peacetime, the Counter Intelligence Corps is expanding and speeding up its activities. In this country civilian-clothed agents are checking the loyalty of certain draftees, Government employees and contract bidders. In Germany and Austria, in mufti or uniform, they are safeguarding GI's from Russian spies and kidnapers, and observing Russian undercover moves. In Korea they are waging a war within a war, shielding United Nations forces against the Communist underground.

CIC was long the Army's least-understood outfit. Even now, in the Army as well as out, not everyone comprehends that the CIC is a part of G-2—the Army's Intelligence organization, directed by Major General A. R. Bolling. One general, told that his CIC detachment was reporting for duty, exclaimed:

"CIC? What in hell are they?"

The answer is: CIC may be anybody or do anything. The waiter at your table may be an agent, and so may the deaf old man sipping vermouth on the terrace, and the sergeant checking your pass at an Army pier. If you are a spy, the burglar who cracked your safe last night may have been CIC. One agent is a fine family man, the father of eleven children, a member of a church and of ten fraternal orders. It is all good "cover" for his CIC work.

CIC is sometimes miscalled a "spy corps." Actually, only a few Counter Intelligence Corps agents operated behind enemy lines during the war, and that was happenstance. One, a Deputy Attorney-General of Wisconsin, and another, a Milwaukee lawyer and former professional football player, were wounded in action and captured. Escaping separately, they prowled Germany and Italy, gathering information which eventually they brought to our lines.

A Filipino CIC agent spent three years in Jap-occupied Manila disguised as a peddler. He sold fruit to Japanese officers and collected information that was radioed to MacArthur. When the Americans landed, the agent greeted them with a map showing enemy troop dispositions. Then he ripped off the sole of his shoe, disclosing his CIC credentials.

CIC's main task, however, is not positive Intelligence, but *Counter* Intelligence—preventing an enemy Intelligence service from gathering information about us. CIC is helped by informants, from Cabinet Ministers down to very unconventional characters whose motives may vary from an empty stomach to loyalty to democracy.

To qualify for CIC, an applicant must be an American citizen, and have made good as a soldier before asking for CIC duty. Agents must be high-school graduates at least, with the same IQ as officer candidates (most officers are college graduates, often have Master's or Doctor's degrees). Finally, they must survive an intensive eight-weeks' investigation of their entire lives.

The CIC includes many lawyers—they are used to gathering and analyzing facts. Teachers, too, often make good agents. One anthropologist was sent to persuade the natives of wild northern Australia not to kill Allied airmen or Japanese spies but to bring them in. The agent, knowing the aborigine's love of shiny things, distributed large metal sunflowers inscribed: *"Vote for Landon,"* and was virtually adopted by the fascinated natives. One college professor became overseer of the redlight district of Belem, Brazil; his assignment was to keep susceptible Americans from fall-

Spy Hunters

by THOMAS M. JOHNSON

ing victim to Axis-bribed sirens. One of the madames was a valuable informant.

CIC requires variety and versatility in its personnel. The Corps has included at various times a forestry expert, a mountain climber, a dance-band leader, a Syrian rug dealer and a poet. One difficult investigation required a man with thirteen qualifications—three of them were that he must speak French and be both a Negro and an Elk. CIC produced him.

At Fort Holabird, a cluster of variegated buildings behind a barbed-wire barrier, near Baltimore, Maryland, the Corps maintains a training school for agents. All are volunteers, some from the Army's ranks, some Reserve officers, war veterans recalled for refresher courses. Classroom hours are not the usual fifteen a week, but forty-four. A third of the students flunk the stiff program, which covers foreign affairs, languages, psychology, law, explosives. And there are special courses in which agents learn to falsify documents, pick locks, crack safes, and deal with coded messages.

Every agent can fire all the soldier's weapons, and many have done so. In the Pacific, an officer carrying a rifle with a sniper's sight averaged a Jap a day. In Africa, an officer won the DSC for standing off a German detachment with a Colt .45, while warning the American main body of possible ambush. In Korea, CIC officers and agents have distinguished themselves in fights with guerrillas.

CIC students learn that the ideal way to trap an enemy spy ring is to penetrate its ranks—an operation calling for strong nerves and cold courage. During the last war, the only known member of a spy ring operating from an Italian dive in Melbourne was the tavern proprietor. If he were arrested, the others would scatter, then resume from an unknown hideout. So a loyal Italian-American sergeant with a Ph.D., disappeared into Little Italy. Hearing nothing from him, a CIC colonel scouted the neighborhood. He found his agent, in dirty uniform, unshaven, stinking of stale wine, outside the repulsive pub. The agent lurched inside, and through the door the officer roared after him: "I'll bring the MPs and get you, you - - - - - - - deserter!"

That ended the Italians' suspicions of the agent. They welcomed him into their ring, and soon all the spies were gathered in.

In Plymouth, England, a Hungarian innkeeper and his family were suspected of trying to extract military information from GI patrons, especially about plans for our invasion of Normandy. A CIC agent, posing as a disloyal GI, won the family's confidence —and enough information to send them all to the Tower of London to be hanged.

The Corps also teaches that when you discover a spy, if he is not doing serious damage, you don't arrest him: you watch him, spot his contacts with others until you have uncovered the entire group and its method of reporting to and receiving instructions from the power for which it works. Then you gobble up everybody, all at once, and get as much further information and help from them as you can.

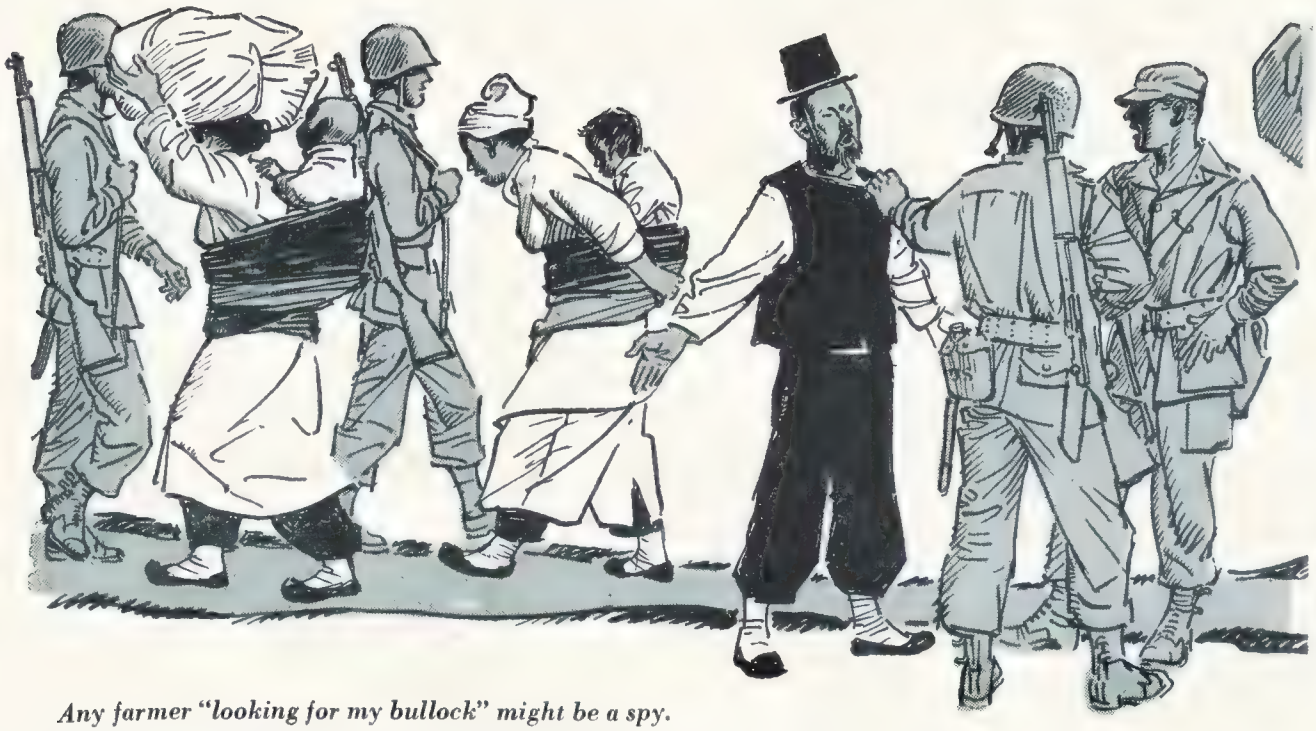
In Eritrea in 1943 we had a big air base about which the local Italian espionage organization was very curious. Their headquarters was a hotel whose Italian-American proprietor had papers proving the U. S. Army did not want him because of his Fascist leanings. Actually, he was a CIC agent, and his hotel rooms all were equipped with microphones. This spy-trap was so valuable that CIC didn't spring it until the mob turned from espionage, which CIC could limit and direct once the spies were spotted in the hotel, to sabotage.

When caught, spies usually talk with an abandon that is astonishing in men and women supposedly chosen for cunning and courage. Their cover stories, however carefully concocted and memorized, seldom avail against our trained interrogators. One, examining the identity cards of two would-be saboteurs, remarked casually: "In forging these, you should spell the mayor's name either with one *t* or with two. You have it both ways." The two confessed in confusion.

Another interrogator who spoke eight languages discovered that a suspect's papers said he was from one part of Italy, while his accent said he was from another.

The agent distributed large metal sunflowers inscribed: "Vote for Landon," and was virtually adopted by the fascinated natives.

Illustrated by FREDERICK CHAPMAN



Any farmer "looking for my bullock" might be a spy.

A CIC agent screening refugees returning to newly liberated Manila stopped a fat, barefooted youth, apparently a Filipino. "Explain those big toes," he challenged. "They spread out as if you'd been wearing Japanese Army sneakers with the big toe separate." A search revealed a pistol, a grenade and sabotage matches hidden in his clothing, together with a Japanese questionnaire with blanks for the number of American troops, tanks and trucks the spy had seen, and their location. He confessed, also, that he was reconnoitering for others who were plotting to kill General MacArthur.

The Corps uses all the tricks of modern science in its work, from invisible ink and chemicals to develop it, to every conceivable photographic, cryptographic and electronic device. For example, an enemy wireless transmitter flashing information by code may be intercepted electronically by CIC agents, and a "fix" computed: Two listening posts take bearings on the sender, and draw the two lines on a map. The point where the lines intersect is the "fix," the location of the sender.

During World War II, ships leaving Africa's Gold Coast with cargoes of manganese, indispensable to American steel manufacture, were often sunk by waiting Nazi submarines. Then the British detected a "WT"—wireless transmitter—sending information to the Nazis from Akkra.

The "fix" pointed to Akkra's only white dentist—an Irishman and anti-British. CIC sent an agent to have his teeth examined—and to complain about the trouble Americans were having with their ore-ships. He gave the dentist fake names and departure schedules. An hour later the interceptors heard the radio flash that same information to the Nazis. . . . The dentist was hanged, and messages in his code were used to lure the submarines to a rendezvous where they were sunk.

The most delicate trick in counter-espionage is to catch a spy and "double" him, or turn him around to send misleading information by his prearranged code and frequency to the enemy. This can be done only by convincing the spy that his life depends upon his ability to double-cross his former master. These messages must be concocted with utmost skill, combining harmless truth with the desired falsehood. And the "doubled" operator must himself send them, for the receiver, knowing his "fist," will immediately detect an impostor. Also, the "doubled" operator must be watched closely, lest he slip in a prearranged code warning: "This stuff is phony. They're making me send it!"

The most successful turn-around spy CIC caught was the Italian known as Alpha Primo. Pretending he was escaping from the Italians, Primo rowed a boat to our lines on the Italian coast near Gaeta and "surrendered." But CIC suspected him and turned him around. In May 1944, Alpha Primo flashed word to his former bosses that the British 8th Army was preparing to attack on Italy's east coast. As a result of Alpha Primo's fake message, the Germans massed reserves there. A few days later the American 5th Army, reinforced by British troops, attacked the west coast and plunged through to Rome. The CIC won public praise from Field Marshal Sir Harold L. G. Alexander for helping win a great battle.

The CIC evolved a security system which assured that in Europe the enemy was surprised by every landing we made except Salerno, whose location was just too obvious.

D-Day security was perhaps CIC's most trying job and its biggest victory. The Nazis never found out the time and place of the Normandy landing, and the American part of the big secret was kept primarily by the work of two thousand CIC agents in the British Isles. They plugged every possible leak, silencing careless talk of GI's and officers in pubs and night clubs, and even intercepting secret invasion papers mailed accidentally to a woman in Chicago. They also assisted in the quiet sequestration of a carpenter who had innocently popped into a room whose walls were papered with top-secret invasion maps.

Throughout the war, CIC won many successes in battlefield detective work by its "ragpicking" operations—the term covered everything from searching a Jap cave for papers, to seizing the files at German-Italian Armistice Commission headquarters in North Africa—a feat accomplished by CIC agents amid splintering glass and flying brick from American and French shellfire. This file yielded valuable information on German Intelligence methods, locations of supply depots which our Army found most useful, and lists of Frenchmen who had collaborated with the Germans.

Near Oran, CIC caught a cadaverous Nazi who possessed maps showing all the Vichy French minefields in

North Africa. That find saved so many American lives and so speeded our advance that thereafter CIC agents regularly accompanied attacking troops under fire.

In Sicily, CIC searched Fascist headquarters, post offices, and other buildings, capturing telltale papers. This "ragpicking" operation turned up a map showing the whereabouts of every Italian troop-unit in Sicily and Italy.

On the Normandy beaches on D-Day, CIC ragpicked papers which revealed many enemy defenses. In the Pacific, ragpicking's first victory was in the Admiralties. Landing with the troops on what was intended as a hit-and-run raid, a CIC agent, Barney Strachan, found documents revealing that only a relative handful of Japanese held the islands—General MacArthur saw the papers and said "Hang on!" And the islands were captured at little cost.

In the next three months CIC ragpicked twenty-six tons of Japanese documents. One find was a map showing a large enemy force hidden exactly where we had intended to send a smaller force.

A valuable "find" in another category was CIC's detection of German "frogmen"—picked swimmers trained and equipped for underwater demolition operations against Allied ships, bridges and port installations. Their equipment and *modus operandi* have been Americanized and adopted by our own forces.

One group of 365 CIC agents was specially trained as air mechanics and fed surreptitiously into Air Force installations to investigate flying accidents. They detected no enemy-inspired sabotage—but they did discover defects in design and structure, and their recommended changes are credited with saving many planes and lives. Now their successors, the Air Force's O.S.I. detachments, guard our airfields all over the world. They do everything—from checking the loyalty of native laborers to shooing panthers off runways!

Routinely, CIC guards military headquarters, supply depots and especially ammunition dumps and gasoline pipelines against fire and explosion. They specialize in detecting and deactivating infernal machines such as explosive-filled fountain pens, fake lumps of coal or ration cans and coffee pots.

One of the Corps' toughest jobs has been to teach Americans security. During the war, lonely officers who confided military secrets to sympathetic dance partners were so dangerous that when CIC suspected one, it assigned an attractive WAC or nurse to date him. If he blabbed, he was transferred to some less sensitive post. CIC also helped postal censors detect and delete the numerous passages, unintentionally dangerous, whereby soldiers and officers tried to tell wives and sweethearts their whereabouts in private code.

Top-secret documents too often have been a source of leaks. Agents inspecting Government offices and military headquarters have found dangerous carelessness with papers. In Washington some unknown men got away with tank blueprints, a secret radar appliance, and even the Great Seal of the War Department! Fortunately, those who took the last two were CIC agents testing our security defenses. But we never did get the blueprints back. CIC now works with top brass to see that classified documents are handled only by qualified persons, and are locked up at night; and that contents of wastebaskets, which may contain telltale worksheets and memoranda, are burned.

CIC is the Army's outpost line of defense against Red undercover work. Russian espionage has been steadily mounting. Today, in our Zones of Germany and Austria, some five thousand Communist spies gather information about anything American: military, political, or economic. Relatively few Russians do the actual spying. They manipulate myriad German, Austrian and satellite agents, recruited by bribery, Communist loyalty, fear of prison or reprisal against relatives. They vary from clever and well trained, to so stupid and ill-prepared that when caught they forget the cover stories they have been taught

Members of the ring were spotted by a trouser button sewed with red thread.

to tell us. Often they work in groups of ten or a dozen; lately one ring of seventeen was tried and convicted.

The Russians have tried to plant agents among American Government employees, polyglot millions of displaced persons, and the estimated 150,000 Red Army deserters. So CIC must screen all three groups, while spotting "confusion agents" sent to them with false stories.

CIC is especially alert for indications that the Russians are getting set for World War III. By questioning fugitives from Russian oppression the Corps learned that the Reds were exploiting German and Czech uranium mines, and were forming in East Germany a "police force" that really was an army.

In Korea, CIC men again are showing that they can operate in a hot war as well as a cold one. Many Korean spies had been trained by Russian-spy masters and sent to honeycomb South Korea before the North Koreans attacked. Added swarms descended with the invading army. They hid among crowds of refugees and infiltrated our lines. Any farmer "looking for my bullock" might be a spy or a saboteur. A keen-eyed CIC agent noticed two Koreans, each with a trouser-fly button sewed on with red thread. Eventually 121 members of the ring were spotted wearing the same bizarre recognition signal.

At Pusan the Corps has caught nearly a thousand saboteurs trying to blow up ships or supplies. Sixteen North Koreans and two Japs who had discovered some of our plans for the landing at Inchon were nabbed trying to radio those plans to North Korea.

By July 1, 1951, some fifty CIC members had received the Bronze Star for heroism in Korea. There had been that many CIC deaths in line of duty before Korea; numbers of agents have been wounded, and many were decorated. But the heroism of the Counter Intelligence Corps is of the kind that seldom reaches the newspapers.

Not long ago, somewhere in Europe, an agent who had been rescued from the tender mercies of the Russians was brought in to CIC headquarters. His clothes were torn, his body bruised, eyes blacked and hair matted with blood. But he still had on his person a small folded square of paper—a warning of when, where and how the MGB would try to slip another spy into our midst. The Russians had not discovered the paper; nor had they been able to torture the agent into giving it up.

This, then, is the measure of the Army's Counter Intelligence Corps. Its members are dedicated, anonymous men whose emblem bears a golden sphinx, symbol of silence. THE END

Sabina *and*

THERE are three main pastures in our ranch. Each of these pastures has a name. And, to us who love this land, each has a personality.

There is the Home Pasture, where my grandfather settled first.

There is the South Pasture—the prettiest grasslands we own, big tablelands cut by cañons that twist in rhythm with flowing creeks.

Then there is Goathead Pasture, named in honor of a weed which produces cruel burrs shaped like a goat's skull. Most of the time we just call this land Goathead. For it doesn't nourish enough cattle to earn the title of pasture.

To get to Goathead, you go north from our ranch headquarters across the fenceless, blue-stem grass flats until you come to the caprock. Goathead starts under the caprock, and it is mostly just wave-like formations of great sand dunes with a sinkhole somewhere near the center known as Poison Lake. Around Poison Lake are three strands of barbed wire to keep stock from coming down to the crystallized shores and drinking the sour water.

Goathead, having little grass and less sweet water, is almost worthless as cattle country. I guess the only creatures in Deaf Jones County who are interested in Goathead Pasture are my beautiful cousin Sabina Renfro, and a crazy young saddlehorse called Sick Folks.

Sabina studied archæology at Texas Tech. So her interest in Goathead is not hard to figure. She'd heard that the melancholy ridges around Poison Lake were used by the Comanche Indians for burial grounds. She said the history of the Comanches for the last six hundred years was waiting in the ridges to be read. Yet because of a thick icing of shifting sand, it was all but impossible to dig into the ridges by hand. So Sabina was pestering our Grandmother Renfro to buy a bulldozer to knock the sandy tops off the ridges.

The crazy saddlehorse, Sick Folks, got his name because he was addicted to eating locoweed. And he was al-

the Talent Scouts

Baseball, archeology, a locoed horse, and some very human nature deep in the heart of Texas.

by FRANK X. TOLBERT

ways pretty sick after he'd eaten a mess of the leguminous narcotic plant. The only place on our ranch where locoweed grows is in some gullies at the head of Poison Lake. Once Sick Folks had been a good cowhorse. Now he was useless. For every time he was mounted, he "cold-jawed" on the bridle bit and ran away to Goathead Pasture. There were no fences between the ranch headquarters and Goathead. And you couldn't stop Sick Folks until he got in the locoweed patches.

He was still a handsome pony. And my granduncle, State Senator Blue Jay Boyd, had been saddling Sick Folks every morning and tying the beast to a corral fence. Uncle Blue Jay did this in the hope that one of his political enemies might pass by and be in a horse-trading mood.

Sabina's archæological studies had made bone-collecting and research on the remains of long-dead Comanches almost as much of an addiction for her as Sick Folks' passion for loco weed.

"You could buy me a bulldozer for my birthday," Sabina begged Grandma Renfro. "Just a little old Government surplus bulldozer. My birthday's coming up next week."

"I'll be a suck-egg mule!" said our grandmother. "I got the best-looking granddaughter in Deaf Jones County. She ought to be interested in nothing but pretty clothes and beaus. Instead, she wants me all the time to buy her some heavy machinery."

FOR several weeks Grandma Renfro had been conducting an all-out campaign to get shed of Sabina through marriage. So our grandmother was very happy when Johnny Ochiltree came to visit our ranch. Johnny Ochiltree was a nice-looking young fellow from Dallas or some other place in the East. And he was a baseball talent scout for an American League club.

Ochiltree came to our place to try and sign up one of our cowpunchers, Quanah Thomas. Quanah was the best ballplayer in Deaf Jones County. He was so good he'd lost interest in playing with Deaf Jones teams. He was like a grown-up man playing with a bunch of grammar-school kids. Once the Deaf Jones team played an exhibition game against Fort Worth of the Texas League. And the Fort Worth pitchers couldn't get Quanah out. After the game, the Fort Worth manager tried to get Quanah to join up with them. But the cowboy hid out.

"I don't want to play no ball," he said.

QUANAH was not as dumb as he sounds, except in his dealings with Sabina. I don't know whether he was in love with her, or just mesmerized by her. She never paid him the least attention unless he'd volunteer to help her on her archæological research. And this was like volunteering to be a coolie. Quanah would saddle the horses and load a pack mule with spades and shovels. And they'd ride over to Goathead, and Quanah would make a try at clearing sand off one of the burial mounds. He shoveled tons of dirt with Sabina bossing him around. But they never found anything of interest to my cousin.

Outside of the Fort Worth manager, who never could even find Quanah, Ochiltree was the first baseball talent scout to come looking for Quanah. When Johnny drove up that day, Grandma Renfro was on the front gallery drinking beer and helping me with my algebra. Sabina was sitting with us too, but her mind was far away. She was writing a letter to a company which manufactured heavy machinery, asking them to send their illustrated catalogue on bulldozers and steam shovels.

Johnny Ochiltree introduced himself, and then he said, most apologetically, that it was necessary that he speak with Quanah Thomas right off.

"I saw him play in a game at the county seat last week, Mrs. Renfro. And I think he's the greatest natural hitter I've ever seen. He's not bad in the outfield, either. We're ready to offer him a good contract. But we're not the only club that's interested in him."

"You're first to get here, son," said Grandma Renfro. Then the old lady inquired: "Fetch your wife along?"

"I'm not married."

"Engaged?"

"No, ma'am."

Grandma Renfro yelled for our cook, Will King Solomon, to bring some more beer out on the gallery. And she spoke, very graciously, to our visitor:

"Sit down and have a beer, Mr. Ochiltree. This is my granddaughter, Sabina Renfro. And this is my grandson, Bud Renfro. I suppose you're one of them famous baseball magnets or whatever it is we're always reading about."

"No," said Ochiltree, speaking to my grandmother but looking at Sabina. "I'm not famous or a magnate. I'm just one of the help with the Blue

Quanah was coming out aboard a bull that was turning himself every way but inside out.

We ran into Uncle Blue Jay looking for stray cattle.

Sox. And I'll be looking for another job if I don't sign up Quanah Thomas. I made the mistake of writing too many glowing letters about Quanah. And now the boss is just spoiling to sign him up."

"Son," said my grandmother, "don't talk about money when you try to sign Quanah. Talk in terms of land. Quanah's just not money-minded. But he does crave land. If you'll explain to him that he might earn enough money playing ball to make a down payment on a little ranch, you won't have no trouble getting him to sign anything. And you're welcome, Mr. Ochiltree, to stay here at the ranch long as you want to, and dicker with Quanah. Sabina, here, will show you around."

"Thanks, Mrs. Renfro, for the advice. But I won't be able to stay even overnight. I've got to get Quanah's name on a contract in the next hour. There's a man named Colonel Avery Sprain on Quanah's trail too. You may have heard of Avery Sprain. He really is a magnate, and he's not much older than I. He's owner of the Bearcats, and one of the most aggressive men in baseball. He has a way of handling ballplayers—in a sort of military fashion. He must want Quanah, or he wouldn't be out this way. I passed him on the road about a half hour ago."

We were going to have a little informal rodeo at the ranch that afternoon sponsored by the Deaf Jones County Rodeo Association. And Quanah Thomas would be coming in from the South Pasture to compete in calf-roping. But Grandma Renfro, who'd taken a liking to Johnny Ochiltree, told the baseball scout that he'd better not wait for Quanah to come in from the pasture.

"You'd best get on a pony right now, son, and high-tail it down there into the South Pasture and talk real sweet about how much land Quanah can buy playing ball. And sign him up before that Colonel Sprain gets here. Sabina, here, will get the horses and take you down to where Quanah is working. —Sabina! You heard me. Take Mr. Ochiltree down in the South Pasture."

"Yes, Grandmother," said Sabina sullenly. For she'd wanted to finish her letter to the bulldozer people. She was dressed for the rodeo, so she had only to pick up her hat and lead our visitor to the horse corrals.

"Mr. Ochiltree," Grandma Renfro called after Johnny, "you'll have to put on some more clothes. The shinnery will tear your nice dress pants."

"Haven't time to change," said Ochiltree, and he followed Sabina toward the corrals.

I HAD finished my algebra lesson. And Grandma Renfro told me to go to the horse corrals and see if Sabina and Johnny had got off all right. When I got to the corrals, Sabina was mounted and Johnny Ochiltree was just getting aboard Sick Folks. The locoed horse was standing there with a silly look around his mouth. When Johnny's weight hit the saddle, Sick Folks whirled, took the bit between his teeth and headed toward Goathead Pasture at full gallop. Ochiltree hung on to the saddlehorn.

Sabina followed at a lope.

Goathead was in the opposite direction from the South Pasture. And Sabina was making no effort to catch and stop the runaway.

It made me angry; but I hadn't any chance to tell Grandma Renfro that Sabina had played a dirty joke on our visitor, for we had another visitor when I got back to the front gallery. Colonel Avery Sprain, owner of the Bearcats, had driven up and he was talking with Grandma Renfro and Uncle Blue Jay Boyd.

When he was introduced to me, Colonel Sprain gripped my hand in a

peculiar manner. Then he cupped one hand over his mouth and yelled: "Woo! Woo! Woo!" He looked displeased when I didn't woo-woo back at him. He said accusingly:

"This boy is not a member of my Junior Trail Blazers!"

Then he told us he was grand sachem of a national organization of kids calling themselves the Junior Trail Blazers.

"I formed the Trail Blazers myself," he said. "And the organization has done wonders for boys. There isn't a sissy in the whole organization."

"Bud would sure like to form a Deaf Jones chapter of the Trail Blazers," said Uncle Blue Jay, who was a natural politician and who was shining up to our distinguished visitor.

Grandma Renfro thought the Colonel had been speaking slightingly of me. And she said:

"Bud is no sissy. He has done a man's work on the range since he was ten years old. Colonel Sprain, Bud will hitch a team to the buckboard and take you down in the pasture to see Quanah Thomas. But wouldn't you like to stop for dinner? Bet you're hungry after that ride from Amarillo."

"Thank you, no. I must see this cowboy at once." The Colonel went back to his car to get his brief-case. And Grandma Renfro whispered to me:

"Take that young varmint out to the west end of Goathead Pasture and just sort of get lost for a few hours. That'll give Johnny Ochiltree plenty of time to conclude his business with Quanah."

"Yes, ma'am," I said. But I didn't get time to tell my grandmother that Johnny Ochiltree was probably over in Goathead too, on a runaway horse.

Sprain came padding back, complaining:

"What are you lounging up here on the gallery for, boy? I thought you'd have my team ready by now. A Junior Trail Blazer carries out orders instantly. I don't mind telling you I'll reward you well after I sign up this Quanah Thomas fellow. What would you say, boy, to a dollar denim shirt?"

Two hours later, Colonel Sprain wasn't in a mood to buy a dollar shirt, or anything else. I drove him all over Goathead Pasture's roughest wagon roads, although I avoided the direct route to Poison Lake for fear of running into Sabina and Ochiltree. And every now and then I'd stop the team and tell the Colonel that I was hearing faraway music and pretty voices like in a choir.

I guess Sprain was pretty relieved when we ran into Uncle Blue Jay Boyd riding the bog in Goathead for stray cattle. Uncle Blue Jay scolded me, and made me drive the Colonel directly back to headquarters.

"You should have a doctor examine your nephew here, Senator Boyd," Sprain told Uncle Blue Jay. "He is deranged. My time is worth thousands of dollars an hour. So you can figure what this stupid boy has cost me this morning. I would have given anything to have had a Junior Trail Blazer driving that buckboard for me this morning. A Trail Blazer never gets lost."

"Handy little boogers, them Junior Trail Blazers," said Uncle Blue Jay.

I was in the corrals unhitching the team from the buckboard when Sabina and Ochiltree came in, riding double on her pony, and with Sick Folks, looking very dissipated, trailing behind them on the end of a lariat rope.

"You should be ashamed of yourself," was the first thing I said to Sabina.

But Johnny, who was riding behind the saddle with his arm around Sabina's waist, came to her defense:

"She had no idea this horse would run away. And she roped the animal when we got to the lake, probably saving my neck. For that horse seems able to run for hours, and I was getting tired of hanging on to the saddlehorn."

I saw that Sabina had him under a spell. So I could do nothing but tell him that Colonel Sprain had arrived, but hadn't seen Quanah Thomas yet.

Ochiltree was in bad shape. He'd lost his hat on the wild ride and had got a fearful sunburn. His eyes were red from *caliche* dust. And when Sabina helped him off the horse, she said, very sweetly and sincerely:

Quanah Thomas was the best ballplayer in Deaf Jones County.

"I'm sorry you had this hard luck, Johnny. But don't worry. We'll see that you sign Quanah first. Now go get a shower, and then we'll have lunch."

Johnny smiled and said: "Goodby, sweet." When he'd bow-legged away, I said:

"With both you and Colonel Sprain working against him, a nice fellow like Ochiltree doesn't have a chance. The Colonel is a smooth operator. And he'll see Quanah at the rodeo after lunch. You should be ashamed of yourself letting Johnny get on that Sick Folks."

"I was mad when I did it," said Sabina. "I am sorry. And I'm really trying to help Johnny. We had a long talk coming in from Goathead. And we've come to a kind of understanding."

I started to unsaddle Sick Folks. Sabina said:

"I'll give you six-bits, Bud, if you'll do me a favor. Feed and water Sick Folks. Then saddle him again, and lead him down to the rodeo arena. Leave the saddle on him down there, and be sure and tie him in the performers' area, back of the stock chutes."

"Figuring on playing another dirty trick on Ochiltree?" I asked.

"No. Uncle Blue Jay wants Sick Folks down there so he can try to trade him off to a political opponent. I told you I'm all for Johnny now. We have an understanding."

Sabina paid me the seventy-five cents in advance. So I watered and fed Sick Folks and led the crazy horse to the rodeo grounds, which are located about a mile north of our ranchhouse. I was late for dinner, and Will King Solomon fixed me a snack. I was eating in the kitchen when I told Grandma Renfro about how Sabina seemed really interested in Johnny Ochiltree, and how my cousin had said that she had an understanding with the talent scout. By "understanding," we figured that Sabina was on the verge of getting engaged.

This news pleased Grandma Renfro very much. She was very gay when she drove to the rodeo grounds in the buckboard, with Colonel Sprain and Uncle Blue Jay Boyd and Sabina and Johnny Ochiltree as passengers. I followed on my pony.

The Colonel had been ribbing Johnny a lot. And when we were seated in our box in the rodeo arena, Sprain said:

"The Blue Sox can just give you this trip as a vacation, Mr. Ochiltree. While you were eating lunch, I was talking to Quanah Thomas at the bunkhouse. And we've come to terms. Quanah has promised to sign with the

Bearcats right after the rodeo. He seems a man of his word. You won't be able to dissuade him. And judging from your appearance, Ochiltree, this country is too rugged for you. You should have stayed at home."

Ochiltree said nothing. For about then Sabina came into the box. She'd been back of the stock chutes talking to the performers. Ochiltree seemed in a kind of daze, as if he'd forgotten his mission to the ranch. He just watched Sabina, and he didn't seem to mind Sprain's ribbing.

Sabina was a pretty sight, I guess. Her long red hair was brushed shiny. She was wearing tight-fitting green riding trousers, and a white silk shirt that clung closely to her body. She was smiling, a little. She never smiled big when strange men were around, for then she'd show the little rust-stain spots on her back teeth—spots caused by drinking the hard, mineral-laden windmill water of Deaf Jones County.

Johnny didn't even take his eyes off her during the rodeo's Grand Entry. In the grand entry, my uncle John Renfro came out first on a good quarterhorse and carrying a big flag of Texas. Next came Uncle Blue Jay Boyd on his old fat cowhorse and carrying the Stars and Stripes. Then came Harold Stinking Wolf, football coach at the high school, who was cussing because he had been talked into riding bareback and wearing an Indian suit of doeskin that had belonged to his grandfather. After Coach Stinking Wolf came hundreds of cowboys, each carrying a guidon with his ranch's brand on the little flag.

One of the first events was wild Brahma-bull riding. These young Brahma bulls had never had a rope on them before, and they were really rawnchy. The announcer spoke over the public-address system:

"And first to compete in Brahma riding, Quanah Thomas, coming out of chute No. 2 . . ."

When the announcer said this, Colonel Sprain began to bellow like one of the bulls:

"Thomas must have lost his senses! He knows that his contract permits him to compete in no rodeo games except calf-roping. I've got to stop this—"

"Too late, Sprain," said Grandma Renfro. And sure enough, Quanah Thomas was already coming out of a chute aboard a bull that was turning himself every way but inside out. The rider went off at about the third jump, rolling to get out of the way of the Brahma's hoofs. Thomas got up and walked a few steps and then fell down. Dr. Duggan, the veterinarian, and a cowboy came out with a

"You could buy me a bulldozer for my birthday," Sabina begged Grandma Renfro. "Just a little old Government surplus bulldozer."

stretcher and carried the rider from the arena. And the announcer said, after several minutes' silence:

"Folks, I'm sorry to announce that Quanah Thomas just broke his right leg in four places on that ride. Too bad, Quanah. A tough break. Give him a big hand, folks."

Colonel Sprain started cussing. Between his swearing, the Colonel waved his hands and made a kind of speech:

"I have always held the rodeo to be the most stupid of all sports. We have just seen a great ballplayer ruined because he was persuaded to ride a brute for the amusement of a few hundred farmers."

Johnny Ochiltree seemed pretty stricken by what had happened to Quanah Thomas, too. But, while the Colonel was swearing the loudest, Sabina put her arm around Johnny's neck and whispered to him:

"Quanah's not really hurt. I just got him to fall off that bull and pretend. The announcer and Dr. Duggan, the veterinarian, were helping me, too. Now, you can scoot back of the chutes and get Quanah signed while the Colonel is sitting here fawnching and fuming."

Uncle Blue Jay rode up to our box, leaned from his horse and spoke, very quietly, to Sprain.

The Colonel then stood up and said to my grandmother:

"Mrs. Renfro, will you accept my apologies for my outburst? I was just heartbroken over the thought of a great player being lost to our national game. Now, Senator Boyd tells me I've been the victim of a series of practical jokes by Miss Renfro here. And that Quanah Thomas has even been persuaded to participate in these. But for Senator Boyd's help, I might have made a fool of myself. But now I'm going to close my business with Thomas. So there'll be no more point in playing childish tricks on me."

He bowed, picked up his brief-case and headed for the performers' area back of the chutes.

Sabina had an anxious look on her sweet face, now. Her arm was still around Ochiltree's neck.

"Why would Quanah do this to me?" she asked. "He promised me he'd pretend his leg was broken."

Uncle Blue Jay, who'd taken a seat in the box, said:

"Quanah had a message for you, too, Sabina. He said he wasn't going to fall off bulls and play-act that his leg was broke and do all sorts of crazy things for you while you sit here watching him and hugging up to a stranger."

"Oh, gosh!" cried Sabina. She pulled her arm from around Johnny's neck so quickly she mussed up his sleek black hair. "I've done it now! I've really fouled up the deal for you, I'm afraid, Johnny. Let's go see Quanah. Maybe it's not too late."

Sabina, Johnny and I sprinted for the back of the chutes. We were some time finding Quanah. For the Colonel, on Uncle Blue Jay's invitation, had taken the cowboy into the judges' stand over the chutes. When we got there, Colonel Sprain was shaking hands with Quanah. And Quanah was putting some papers into a five-gallon lard can in which he usually kept his best ropes to protect them from moisture.

"Did you sign those papers, Quanah?" Sabina asked, reproachfully.

"No," said Quanah, looking just as reproachful. "But I will soon as I get back to the ranchhouse where I can use Grandma Renfro's office. I'll study the contract some as I ride to the house. But it reads good already, just reading it fast. I'll be buying a piece of land down in King County soon."

Quanah tied the lard can to his saddlehorn and then he got aboard his big blue-roan horse. He said:

"You coming now, Colonel Sprain? It's a right smart walk to headquarters, though the ranchhouse looks near across the flats. You're welcome to ride double with me."

"No, thanks," said Sprain. "Senator Boyd is waiting back of the grandstand with the buckboard to take me to the house. I'll be seeing you in a few minutes."

When Quanah and his lard can had ridden away at a swift trot, Sabina said in a very sweet tone:

"Oh, Colonel, Uncle Blue Jay told me to tell you that he's foul-line judge and he can't leave the rodeo. Bud here will drive you over. The team is sort of wild for you to handle."

"No, no, no. Not that insane boy," cried Colonel Sprain. "I'll walk first."

"Or," continued Sabina, beaming on the baseball executive, "you can ride Uncle Blue's old saddlehorse over there."

She indicated Sick Folks, who was tied to a chute near by and was regarding us, pleasantly. Sick Folks, except for the imbecilic expression around his mouth, appeared to be a reliable pony.

As the Colonel seemed to hesitate, Sabina said, challengingly:

"Oh, you can't ride, Colonel? I'm sorry. I thought you were an outdoorsman. I'm sorry—"

"Of course, I ride," replied the Colonel, angrily. "Very well, too. I'll borrow Mr. Boyd's horse. Thank him for me."

"I will," said Sabina. She untied Sick Folks and held the bit while the Colonel got into the saddle.

"The stirrups are a little long," said Sprain, "but they'll serve for a short ride. Good-by, Miss Renfro."

"Good-by, Colonel," said Sabina, and released her hold on the reins. Sick Folks whirled, took the bit between his teeth and galloped toward Goathead Pasture. And Colonel Sprain started pulling all the leather he could get his hands on.

There were no fences between the rodeo grounds and the upper end of Goathead, where the loco weed grows.

"Amazing," said Johnny Ochiltree. "But not very ethical. What if the guy gets hurt?"

"He said he could ride very well," answered Sabina, callously. "Once Sick Folks has a good mess of locoweed, he'll permit himself to be kicked back to headquarters. It'll take the Colonel at least three hours though, for a short trip to the weed patch and a long journey back. Quanah Thomas will get tired of waiting over at headquarters for Sprain. Especially since Quanah is entered in calf-roping and has to be back.

"Quanah will be sore at the Colonel for not showing up. That's when you land him. Just offer him more dough than the Colonel did. If you can't get Quanah signed before Sick Folks returns from Goathead with Sprain, you deserve to lose your job."

Johnny said, gayly:

"We'll give him twice what the Colonel offered. And don't you want to come along with me, sweet?"

"No," said Sabina. "And quit calling me 'Sweet.' Remember our little understanding about that used bulldozer the Blue Sox are going to send me if Quanah hits .300 his first season. I'll be watching the Santa Fe gondola cars in October for that bulldozer."

Most of the gayness left Johnny Ochiltree when she said this. I said:

"Johnny, you can take my pony. He'll get you to headquarters without trouble. Then just sit around and let Quanah wait a spell. When the Colonel doesn't show up after a half hour or so, make Quanah your offer. He'll take it. And your signed contract will be in that lard can where Quanah keeps all his valuables before another hour has passed."

COLONEL SPRAIN and Sick Folks were just a blur on the northern horizon now. Johnny got aboard my pony. He said to Sabina:

"Good-by sweet. I'll send you that bulldozer—all wrapped in a pink ribbon."

Then he rode off.

"I thought," I said to Sabina, "that you had an understanding with Ochiltree. Grandma Renfro and I been figuring on you marrying him and us getting shed of you."

"Johnny and I have an understanding," said Sabina, "that his company will buy me a second-hand bulldozer if Quanah hits .300 with the Blue Sox."

I went back to the rodeo. Grandma Renfro was rooting for the bronc riders. I didn't have the heart to tell her that Sabina didn't really have a romance up with Johnny Ochiltree.

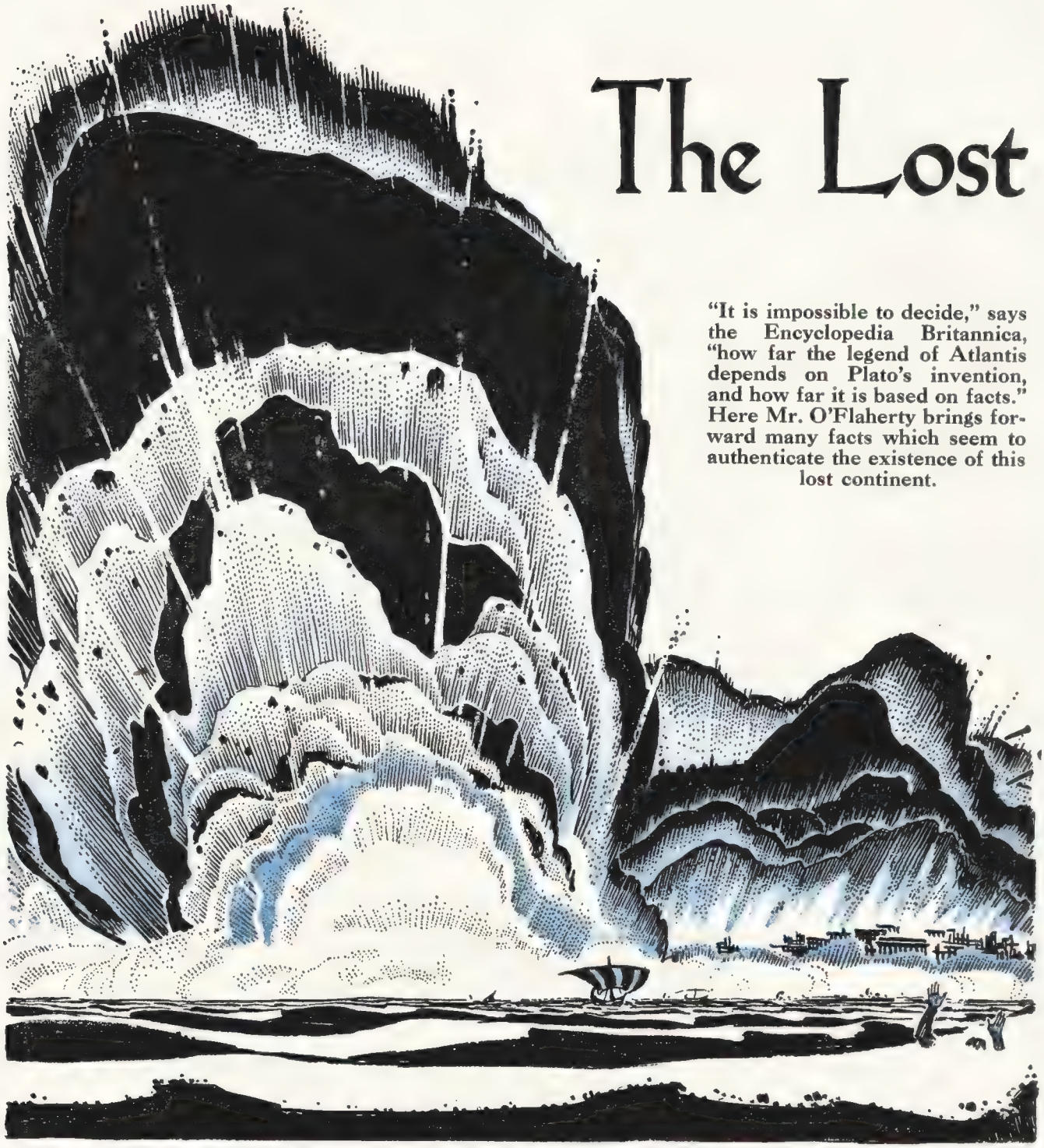
When we got back to the ranch Johnny and Quanah had gone. And it was a good thing, too.

For Sabina and Colonel Sprain came in around sundown, riding double on her pony and with Sick Folks staggering behind them on the end of Sabina's lariat rope. They'd had a long talk on the way in. And they'd cooked up some kind of scheme in which Sabina was to get immediate delivery on a new bulldozer if she could sweet-talk Ochiltree into selling Quanah's contract to the Bearcats.

Illustrated by BENTON CLARK

Sick Folks took the bit between his teeth and headed toward Goathead Pasture at full gallop.

The Lost



"It is impossible to decide," says the Encyclopedia Britannica, "how far the legend of Atlantis depends on Plato's invention, and how far it is based on facts." Here Mr. O'Flaherty brings forward many facts which seem to authenticate the existence of this lost continent.

IF the legend of the Lost Continent of Atlantis is true, there is enough pure wrought gold one mile deep in the Atlantic Ocean, off the foot of the Azores, to dwarf the treasures of the Incas and make the Government's hoard at Fort Knox look like a penny bank.

There is enough, if the ten kingdoms of Atlantis ever existed, to stabilize the currency of a nation or to make substantial inroads on the national debt of the United States. (The gold of the Inca Empire, next-door neighbor to Atlantis, which Pizarro looted for Spain, furnished much of the "hard money" on which European commerce was based for centuries.

There is also, if a long list of reputable scientists since the days of Plato is to be believed, the sunken remnant of a civilization which not only antedated but influenced all of the civilizations now supposed to be the oldest, including the Mediterranean, the Celtic, the Central and South American, the Eurasian and the Chinese.

According to the legend, which is found in the primitive lore of equatorial peoples halfway round the earth, the continent of Atlantis, a thousand miles wide and several miles long, vanished with all its people in one mighty convulsion beneath the waves of the South Atlantic about eleven thousand years ago.

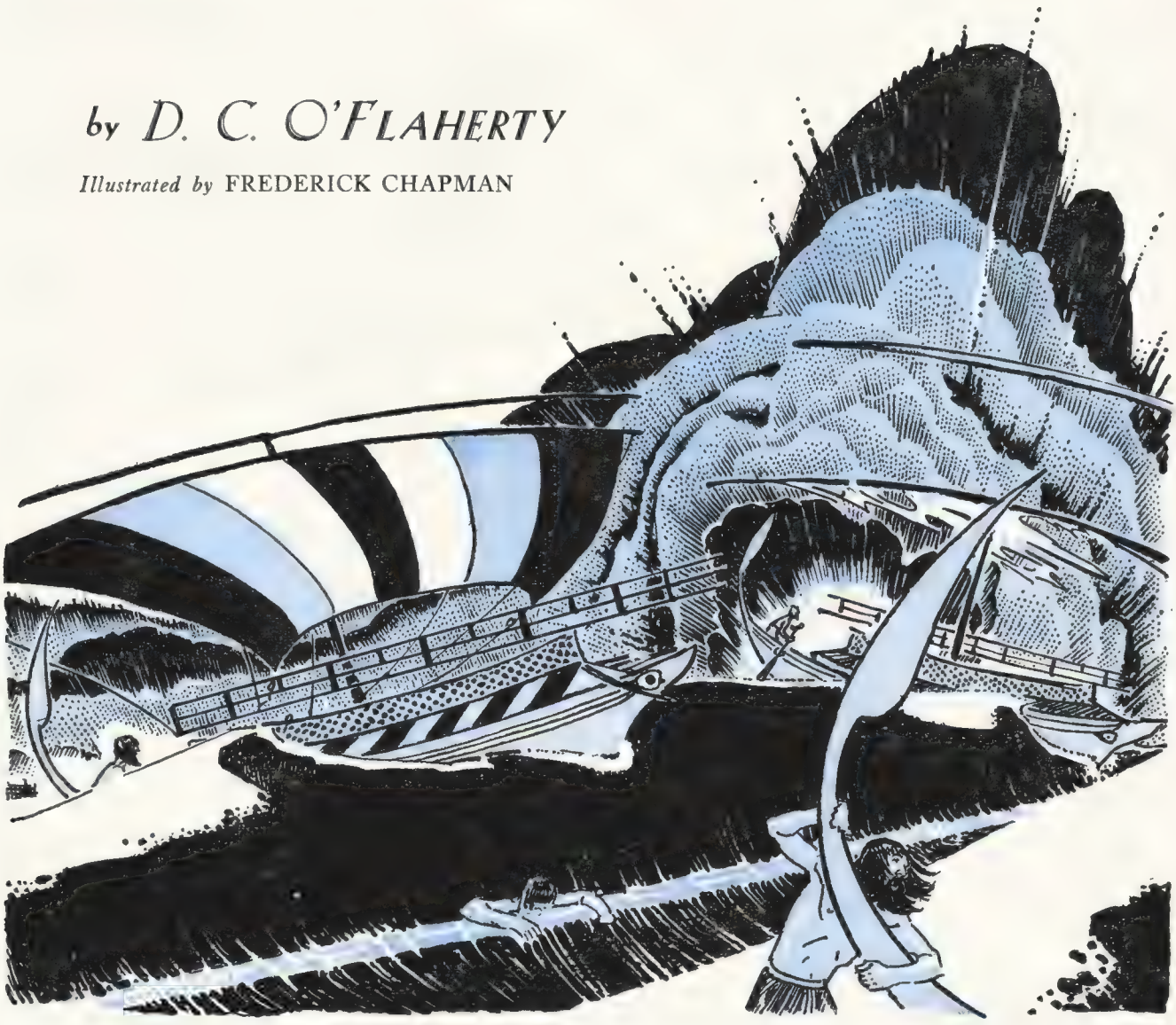
Plato says that the catastrophe occurred "in a single dreadful day and night," carrying to the bottom of the sea a nation which ruled an empire more far-flung than that of Rome, and lived in a splendor which would dim the light of Egypt and make Johnny-come-latelies of the ancient Greeks. The Atlanteans are described in the stone histories of Mexico and Egypt as ruddy, fair-bearded men, seafarers, merchants and warriors who carried the trident of Poseidon, their patron god, to all corners of the known world as the Romans later carried their eagles.

The best description of what Atlantis is supposed to have been like comes

Continent of Atlantis

by D. C. O'FLAHERTY

Illustrated by FREDERICK CHAPMAN



from Critias, a Greek philosopher whose account is related in one of the dialogues of Plato.

Critias professed to be able to describe the geography and cities of Atlantis in great detail—detail of which he had no proof, of course, but which had come down to him from the Greek lawgiver Solon, who in turn had it from the priests of Egypt. Since the Egyptians were the most highly civilized people of antiquity, and their historical records reliable, their legend of a civilization antedating their own undoubtedly has some basis in fact.

According to Critias, Atlantis was a veritable fortress of a continent, lofty and precipitous, with a mesalike fertile plain sloping down to the sea at the southern tip. It was divided into ten lesser monarchies, ruled by the ten sons of Poseidon and Cleito, and it had four rivers, in the shape of a cross, flowing to the four points of the compass. (In connection with this part of the tale, it is well to remember that the gods of mythology were frequently early kings and heroes subsequently elevated to divine status.)

In the northern part of Atlantis, Critias said, were mountains celebrated for their number and size and beauty, of which the Azores today could easily be the peaks. The mountains were extraordinarily rich in metals and the Great Plain teemed with cattle, some of which played a part in religious ceremonies as they did in Crete. There were also lakes, marshes and forests which brought forth fruits and vegetation "in fair and wondrous and infinite abundance," enough to feed herds of elephants, "the largest and most voracious of beasts."

Among the metals mentioned by Critias are not only gold and silver, but tin, copper, bronze and brass, as well as an alloy called *oreichalkos* or *orichalcum,* the secret of which vanished with Atlantis. *Oreichalkos,* which is a Greek word meaning "mountain copper," ranked in value

The pottery found in Peru and the ruins of Troy favored the same design.

with gold and above silver. Critias says that it was brilliant red in color and glistened like fat. One may imagine that it had the color of a red neon light shining through an oily glaze.

The chief city of Atlantis, Critias placed in the interior, surrounded by the Great Plain. It was connected with the sea by an enormous canal, one hundred feet deep and three hundred feet wide, and was ringed by three turreted walls, providing a defense in depth for the capital. The outer wall was sheathed in brass, the middle one in tin, and the innermost one "flashed with the red light of orichalcum."

The capital was noted, besides its palaces and public buildings, for three things: its therapeutic hot and cold springs, struck from the earth by Poseidon, or Neptune, himself; its bristling naval base and commercial harbor lined with triremes; and its Temple to the God Poseidon.

This temple, in whose courtyard roamed the same sacred bulls as in ancient Greece, was an immense domed hall of pure silver, pinnacled in gold and inlaid with ivory, larger than the Temple of Karnak in Egypt. In its center stood a gigantic solid gold statue of Poseidon driving a chariot with six winged horses reaching to the cupola of the dome.

The Cathedral of Notre Dame could be placed inside the Temple of Karnak as it stands today without touching the walls; this gives some idea of the proportions of the statue of Poseidon. The Statue of Liberty, placed inside the temple, would loom no larger than the figure of the virgin in a wall shrine.

Surrounding Poseidon and his oceanic steeds were one hundred gold statues of Nereids, the traditional number, riding on dolphins. Critias says that there were also in the temple countless other golden images dedicated by private individuals.

"And around the temple," he adds, "were placed statues of gold of all the ten kings and their wives; and there were a great many offerings, both of kings and individuals, coming both from the city itself and the foreign cities over which they held sway."

Critias charges that the Atlanteans, backed by their "great and wonderful empire," were "wanton aggressors against the whole of Europe and Asia" until the Athenians put a halt to their forward march. (Critias was an Athenian). The Atlanteans, he says, subjected parts of Libya within the Columns of Heracles (Gibraltar) as far as Egypt and of Europe as far as Tyrrhenia.

"Nine thousand," Critias informed Plato, "was the sum of the years which had elapsed since the war which was said to have taken place between all those who dwelt outside the Pillars of Heracles and those who dwelt within them."

Such then, if the tale be true, was the city and empire ruled by the Atlanteans in their island Eden, as recorded by the ancient Egyptians and told to the Greeks. In the words of Edwin Bjorkman, writer on Atlantis: "The total impression you get from Critias' description is that of an unbelievably rich commercial center, fond of display and good living, like Tyre or Carthage at the height of their prosperity, and possessing mercantile connections with all quarters of the globe."

The astronomical estimate of the wealth of the Atlanteans contained in all of the ancient accounts is based upon the tradition that they not only mined gold and silver in their own mountains, but scoured the world for the precious metals, which were sacred to Poseidon. A warlike people, such as the Atlanteans are described as being, undoubtedly would have founded or subdued colonies which they ruled with an iron hand and from which they exacted heavy tribute.

The gold and silver, being sacred metals, were used only for ornamentation of temples and altars. Plato says that in successive generations "every

king surpassed the one who came before him" in piling up treasure in the habitations of the gods.

The Incas of Peru, who may have been satraps of Atlantis, did exactly the same thing and for the same reason. They did not coin gold and silver money, nor did the Atlanteans, according to the legend. The exclusively sacred character of the metals is the reason, say the atlantologists, that no coins of gold or silver have come down to us from Atlantis; the coins that have come down, of copper, bronze or some other useful metal, they say, have been labeled Phoenician, since the Phoenicians are the first world travelers we know anything about.

It is a fact, of course, that primitive peoples do not use gold and silver for money. Until a late period in historic time, only useful articles were acceptable as a medium of exchange. In the case of metals this meant copper, bronze, tin or iron. Gold and silver do not make good cooking pots, pans, spears, or swords; and they are not necessarily more appealing to the eye than creations in copper or glass, which was once more valuable than gold among certain races.

NOTHING astonished the American aborigines more than the high value set upon gold and silver by the Spaniards. They could not understand it. Natives who traded gold dust for iron tools with Columbus' men bolted quickly into the jungle with their loot before the strangers should discover that they had been goldbricked —or gold-dusted.

Thus, since none of the gold or silver of Atlantis went into the coinage of money, say the atlantologists, which would have tended to scatter it abroad, the treasure is right where it was when a giant earthquake ripped the island continent from its roots and submerged it three thousand fathoms deep in a single day and night.

Two basic questions arise in connection with the legend. One, was such a catastrophe possible, and if so, in the case of Atlantis, is there any probability that it took place?

On the first point, geologists are agreed that the destruction of the continent was not only possible, but that it took place, though not necessarily in a day and night. The hitch, so far as the legend is concerned, is that geologists in general have always insisted that the great sunken continent off the Azores, known as Dolphin's Ridge, was sent to the bottom by a convulsion before man appeared on the earth.

The atlantologists' retort to this is that the geologists have been proven wrong over and over again in their estimate of the relative time of man's debut on the terrestrial globe; that whenever a definitive date has been set, the skeleton of an earlier man has been discovered; and that the end is not yet.

Furthermore, they point to the fact that the date of the sinking of the Atlantic continent has moved forward steadily in the calculations of the geologists, some of whom now say that the great Atlantic changes took place as recently as eight hundred thousand years ago.

Even acceptance of this remote date, so contend the atlantologists, would not rule out man as an inhabitant of Atlantis. Recently, in Kenya Colony, the skull of a highly organized human being, two hundred and fifty thousand years old, has been discovered, a find which has caused reexamination of many of the accepted theories on the antiquity of *homo sapiens.* Further discoveries of the bones of the race to which the Kenya man belonged may show that, in Africa at least, man had developed a pretty good brain half a million or three quarters of a million years ago, which would bring him smack into the era when Atlantis, according to the geologists, was above water.

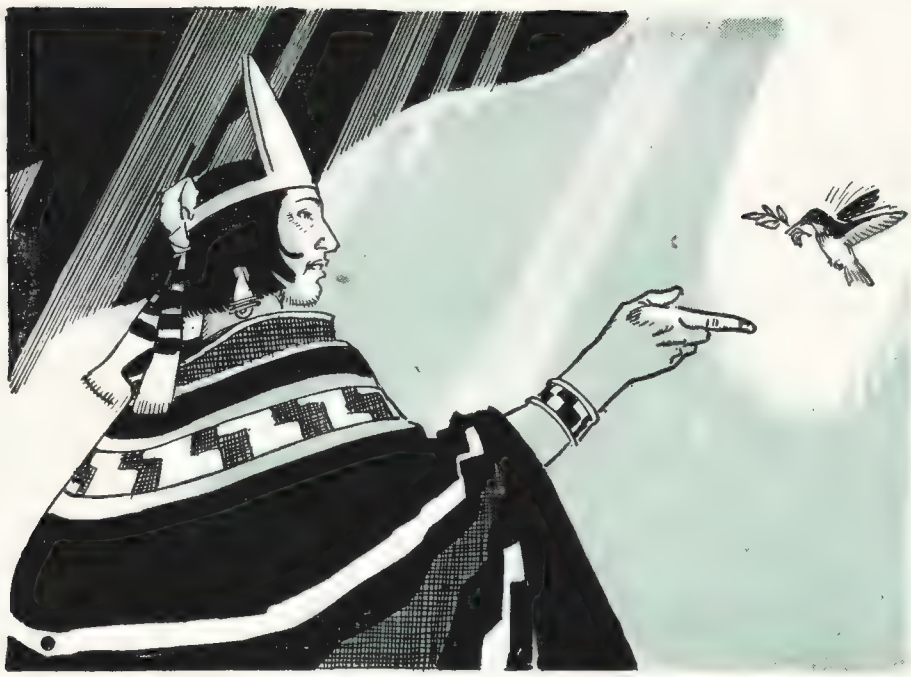
As evidence that the geologists may be wrong by aeons about the date of the submersion of Atlantis, the atlantologists cite the fact that every race on earth preserves some record of a cosmic disaster which occurred about nine thousand years before the Christian Era (the Biblical Deluge) in which the sun was blotted out, the earth's crust torn asunder, and great tidal waves engulfed millions of human beings.

THE racial remembrance of this catastrophe is the same among the Mexicans and the North American Indians as it is among the Hebrews and the Greeks, indicating that the Deluge is related in the Bible was a global fact and was witnessed by people in many parts of the world.

Furthermore, the evidence of a land bridge between Europe and America is substantiated, say the atlantologists, by the fact that the fauna and flora of the two continents are often identical, whereas the fauna and flora of the Pacific are entirely different from those of either Europe and America. They reason from this state of affairs that both men and plants must have at some time traveled from one continent to the other.

There are pictures of lions and elephants in carvings by New World artists, yet presumably those artists had never seen such animals.

The Atlanteans were wanton aggressors against the whole of Europe and Asia.



Tezpi's hummingbird returned like the dove of the Ark, bearing a branch.

. Science is continually unearthing the ruins of earlier civilization which have left us no more record than the Atlantean. For centuries the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in Italy, through which tourists now stroll every day, were forgotten, as was the site of Troy.

In 1931 the remains of an ancient city, closely tied to Atlantis in the legend, and known as Poseidonis, were uncovered on the shore of Tunis in in North Africa. This city with the suspiciously Atlantean name had long been considered just another Atlantis-connected myth. The incontestable evidence of its existence dug up in 1931 caused many scholars to seize upon it as proof that Poseidonis in North Africa was actually the Atlantis of the legend.

There are two objections to this identification. One, the ruins of the city in North Africa indicate that it was never a city of the size and importance ascribed to Atlantis, being hardly more than a large settlement; second, it was not buried by an earthquake but sank beneath the desert sands ages after the river on which it had been located dried up.

Plato, of course, was firmly convinced of the truth of the Egyptian story of a great land in the west; and it must be remembered that Plato was a man of science, a mathematician and a thinker, who would not likely have been taken in by mere moonshine.

As to the possibility that Atlantis went down like the *Titanic,* carrying its inhabitants with it, believers in the theory point out that earthquakes in historic times have destroyed whole communities and inundated large areas. There is also no doubt that Atlantis was located above a hotbed of ocean volcanoes.

The power of an earthquake to obliterate large sections of the population without a trace, in this very region, was demonstrated in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, in which sixty thousand persons lost their lives. A large number of them had sought safety on a marble quay which sank to the bottom of the sea, *and not one of their bodies ever floated to the surface.*

Numerous other instances of large-scale inundation could be listed, as in the earthquake in India in 1819 when a tract of land two thousand miles square was submerged. The Zuyder Zee in Holland was created in a similar manner in the year A.D. 1282. Islands and continents have been rising and falling since the earth first began to cool, and the Biblical holocaust of eleven thousand years ago, which probably was caused by a comet coming too close to the earth, could easily have engulfed a continent the size of Atlantis.

The visitor from interstellar space, some scientists believe, came very close to ending the existence not only of one continent but of the earth itself. The entire North American continent was raised millions of years ago from the sea, possibly by a similar disturbance, as evidenced by the presence of marine fossils in the strata underlying the plains of Kansas.

Granted, then, that Atlantis did at one time exist, at least geographically, and then disappeared, the second question arises: Is it probable that the continent was inhabited by people who had achieved a high degree of culture, and that this culture spread into both hemispheres?

The evidence for the affirmative is so impressive that an unprejudiced investigator is forced to conclude, as *Sherlock Holmes* did of the evidence in quite another case, that many a man has been hanged on less. Indeed, the evidence is so voluminous and detailed that if the theory of Atlantis is discounted altogether, the history of the human race would appear to be a series of coincidences so remarkable as to be impossible.

If there was never an inhabited land bridge between Africa and America, we must believe that identical civilizations sprang up at the same time on opposite sides of the globe, with similar alphabets, similar hieroglyphic systems of writing, the same knowledge of engineering, the same architecture, the same legendary literature, the same religious customs, and the same complicated calendar; and that these civilizations had no knowledge of, or contact with, one another.

The likelihood that this could happen, of course, is about the same as the likelihood that every player in a bridge tournament would be dealt thirteen cards of the same suit every time he played, every day for a full week.

The most striking testimony to the common origin of Old and New World civilizations lies in the pyramids. These are found not only in Mexico and Egypt, but in a "pyramid belt" which begins in Mesopotamia and Armenia and unerringly follows a straight line through the Valley of the Nile across the Atlantic to Mexico and thence through Guatemala and Salvador.

These pyramids do not bear merely a superficial resemblance to one another because of their shape. They were erected on the same mathematical principles, and for the same purpose, by men who drew on a common pool of engineering knowledge.

Consider these points of similarity between the Egyptian and Mexican pyramids. Both were either temples, dedicated to sun and moon and worship, or abodes of the dead, and both were used for the study of astronomy. Both were constructed four square to the compass and in each the line through the center of the structure is in the astronomical meridian. The construction of the grades and steps is identical, the interior arrangements follow the same general pattern, being honeycombed by small passageways; and in both Egypt and America they were coated with cement. Central American pyramids are built of rubble

and faced with stone, the exact manner of the construction of the step pyramids at Sakkarah, Egypt.

There is a striking resemblance between the Great Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan near Mexico City and the Great Pyramid of Cheops. Both have coffin-like galleries leading down to a sepulchral chamber; and at both Teotihuacan and in the Valley of the Nile there is respectively a Street of the Dead and a Valley of the Dead.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS have long been puzzled by the similarities of the pyramids on both sides of the ocean, which would be difficult to account for by mere coincidence, but few have been willing to accept the logical conclusion that they were built by men who were the sharers of a common or Atlantean civilization.

The influence of Asiatic culture on the American (or possibly vice versa) is seen, however, in other architecture and objects whose mute testimony is as solid as those of the pyramids.

The resemblance between the buildings of the Peruvians and those of the Pelasgians in ancient Greece and Italy has been called "the most remarkable in the history of architecture." Their pottery also favored the same designs, especially in the owl-headed vases which have been found in Peru and in the ruins of Troy. The looting Spaniards came across a chamber in the Inca palace furnished exactly as Homer describes the interior of the house of Menelaus:

> The doors were framed of gold.
> Silver pilasters, which with grace upheld
> Lintel of silver framed; the ring was burnished gold
> And dogs on each side of the door there stand
> Silver and golden.

The Greeks and the Mayans used the same false arch; monoliths erected in Latin America not only duplicate those of the Near East but in some cases depict human beings whose cast of countenance is distinctly European.

The list of *objets d'art* found in Latin America which resemble the Egyptian would fill a book. Stone scarabs absolutely identical with the Egyptian have been unearthed in excavations near San Angel, Mexico. In the National Museum at Mexico City there is a statue of the Goddess Xochipilly which has a definite Egyptian aspect. Fashions in hairdress, as illustrated by this and other sculptures, were the same as in Egypt.

At Sihuatan in Salvador there have been found wolf-headed statuettes in the likeness of the Egyptian god Anubis. The priests of Ecuador wore robes and breastplates like those of the Egyptian priests. In Guatemala a copper coin of the Mayas has been found whose design is identical with that of a coin of ancient Tyre: a serpent entwined about a palm tree, with representations of the Pillars of Hercules on either side. The list could go on.

These might be dismissed as accidental similarities, but there are others that cannot. All over Central America are artists' conceptions of elephants which are plainly the same as the elephants of today. They are especially favored as decorations for doorways and at Palenque there exists a carving of a priest wearing an elephant headdress.

Since there are no elephants in the western hemisphere, how did the elephant develop into a popular model for Mayan sculptors? Plato says that Atlantis abounded in elephants, but then Atlantis is a myth.

The Mayans themselves had a tradition that their ancestors came over the sea from the East, from a mountainous island paradise which was subsequently destroyed by the wrath of the god Huracan, and that the name of this golden isle was Aztlan. The word Aztec seems to be derived from it.

It requires no torturing of the language to identify the Aztlan of the Mayas, which was to the east, with the Atlantis of the Greeks, which was to the west.

In Venezuela today there is a gradually disappearing race of white-skinned "Indians," the Paria, whose chief village in more flourishing times was called Atlan. This almost extinct race preserves the same tradition, that their fatherland, a beautiful and magnificent island in the sea, was destroyed by a catastrophe ages ago and that a few of their ancestors escaped to Venezuela. The legend is basically the same throughout Central and South America.

NEXT to the monuments which a race of people leaves behind, the surest clue to their origin is their written and spoken language. From Mexico to the Amazon the ancient races of this hemisphere have left their written records in hieroglyphics which are in definitely the same form as the Egyptian. What history is locked in these symbols is mostly unknown, as scholars have not yet found the master key. Few manuscripts are left to aid their search, since the Spaniards, believing them to be works of the devil, destroyed all they could lay hands on.

The Mayans, who were geographically closest to the sea lanes of the Atlantic, used a phonetic alphabet like those of the Mediterranean peoples. Their language, they said, was brought to them in ships from over the sea. It may well have been, since five of the twenty characters of the Mayan alphabet are identical with Old Greek, Hebrew and Phoenician, while the rest bear a strong family resemblance.

In fact, the written language of the Mayas so closely resembled the Mediterranean languages that the explorer LePlongeon in the last century exclaimed:

"One third of the (Maya) tongue is pure Greek! Who brought the dialect of Homer to America? Or who took to Greece that of the Maya? Greek is the offspring of the Sanskrit. Is Maya? Or are they coeval?" LePlongeon also identified many Mayan words as Assyrian.

Ignatius Donnelly, the brilliant scholar and lecturer whose "Atlantis and the Antediluvian World" remains the classic on the subject, cites a list of words from the Chiapenic dialect of the Mayas which derive directly from the Hebrew, a sister tongue of the Phoenician.

THE word for *"son"* in Chiapenic is *"been;"* in Hebrew, *"ben."* *"Daughter"* is *"batz"* in the Yucatan tongue; *"bath"* in Hebrew. The words for father are *"abagh"* and *"abba"* respectively. A star of the zodiac is *"chimax"* in Mayan and *"chimah"* in Hebrew. A Mayan king was called *"molo;"* Hebrew, *"maloc"* or *"moloch."*

God was known as *Elab* in both Mayan and Hebrew. To be afflicted in Chiapenic was *"chanam;"* in Hebrew, *"chanan."* The month of September is *"tsiquin"* in the former and *"tschiri"* in the latter. *"Chic"* meant *"more"* in Mayan; in Hebrew, *"chi."* *"Rich"* was *"chabin"* in one language and *"chabic"* in the other. The word *"to give"* was the same in both languages, *"votan."*

In Peru, the Quichua or Inca tongue is preserved to this day, and shows an affinity for the Sanskrit only a little less remarkable than that of the Mayan for Hebrew and Greek. The Quichuas are described as white men who came over the sea from the East, in the Peruvian legend.

Quichua had no "v," any more than Greek has, consequently the sound is represented by *"hu"* followed by a vowel. The verb *"to call"* in Quichua is *"huakia;"* Sanskrit, *"vaac."* House was *"huasi"* in Quichuan, resembling the Sanskrit word *"vas,"* to inhabit. *"Huayra"* meant to breathe, in the upper Andean air; the Sanskrit word is *"va."*

Petroglyphs in the Amazon jungle tell of the progress of this race across South America to the west, describing them as having come from across the ocean. When the Quichuas, of whom the Incas were a branch, finally established their massive civilization of

With modern equipment it should be possible to dredge up a statue.

temples, tombs, pyramids and aqueducts, whose ruins exist today, they called their kingdom Perou or Peru. Is there any significance here in the fact that "Merou" was one of the alternate names of Atlantis in the ancient chronicles?

In the Brazilian state of Piauhy, whose Pyramid of Morvao is ascribed to the Phoenicians, lives a tribe of Indians known as the Gheges. They speak a language closely kin to that of a tribe of Albanian hillmen who also call themselves Gheges. Here again the long arm of coincidence would seem to be in for impossible stretching. It is certainly not unreasonable to assume that the Gheges of antiquity, or of Atlantis if you will, migrated east and west, to Europe and the Amazon, keeping the name of the tribe and the language intact.

Without some such theory there is no rational explanation of the language of the Basques, those mystery people of the Spanish peninsula. The Basque tongue has no kinship with any known European tongue; yet its speech resembles that of certain American tribes.

A Brazilian philologist, E. O. de Thoron, says that his study of the Quichua tongue in Peru has convinced him of its Egyptian, Greek and even Hindustani origin. The Quichua has long intrigued the student of words, because it has in it echoes of the speech of Gaul, Ireland, England, Bactria, Greece, Egypt and Hindustan. One of its common words, *"ayar,"* meaning primitive chief, is identical with the Sanskrit word of the same meaning.

The similarities of language, like those of art and architecture, could be listed endlessly. Two more outstanding resemblances here, however, should be noted. The word Teotihuacan, in old Mexican, means "Place of the Gods," the prefix *"teo"* meaning god. This is one of the coincidences that caused LePlongeon's jaw to drop. In Greek, of course, the word is *"theos."* The Indian word for corn is *mahiz* or *mahis.* In the Livonian and Lettish languages of Europe, *mayse* means bread; in Gaelic, *maise* is food; in old high German, *"maz"* is meat. Did the link of language extend from the tablelands of Mexico to the shores of the Baltic, and if so by what bridge?

To a philologist, the wonder is not that the languages of East and West were so much alike but that they changed so little over what must have been centuries of prehistoric time.

A comparative study of the religions of the eastern and western hemispheres also suggest that they had a common origin.

When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico, their priests were flabbergasted to find the inhabitants venerating the Cross. (The veneration of the Cross was a pagan custom before the Christian Era in Egypt, Assyria, Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, India and China.) The missionaries of Cortez were also confronted with a puzzling set of familiar customs, such as confessions of sin, absolution, baptism, circumcision, and the use of holy water.

In all this the holy men detected the machinations of the Evil One.

"The devil," wrote one indignant padre, "stole all he could."

The Mexican traditions of the Deluge also paralleled those of the Hebrews and the Chaldeans. The Noah of the Toltecs was Tezpi, who assembled his wife and children on a raft, together with an assortment of animals and some stores of grain, to ride out the tempest. When it was over, Tezpi sent out a vulture to seek signs of land. The vulture, like Noah's first messenger, did not return, but remained to gorge itself on the carcasses of the dead.

Tezpi then sent out a hummingbird which returned, like the dove of the Ark, bearing a leafy branch in its mouth.

The Toltecs, who preceded the Aztecs, also handed down the story of the Tower of Babel in exactly the Biblical form. A tower, or zacuali, was built to escape the flood, but the language of the builders was confused, and they were unable to finish it. As a result, they perished in the waters which covered the earth to a depth of *fifteen cubits,* the exact depth mentioned in the Biblical account.

The Spaniards also found the inhabitants of Mexico using the same calendar which the Egyptians had used for thousands of years; not just a

similar calendar, but an identical one. It consisted of 365 days composed of equal months with five days left over. Its intercalation was thirteen days every fifty-two years. Thus the year of both the Egyptian and Mexican calendars was exactly 365 days and six hours, and it required a high degree of astronomical knowledge to realize that this was the true length of the year.

The history of Egypt itself indicates that the Egyptians (who hated and feared the sea) had no contact with the ancient inhabitants of America, but that both races sprang from a common stock and culture which had their beginnings somewhere around the Pillars of Hercules.

There is not a shred of tangible evidence that the civilization of Egypt originated in Egypt. In Egypt there is no primitive period. It has no archaic epoch; it is the only country in the world that does not. (It is also the only country which has no Deluge legend.) Egyptian civilization, so far as any dug-up relics attest, was born in full panoply on the bank of the Nile ten thousand years ago—like Aphrodite springing full-blown from the forehead of Zeus.

Since civilizations do not arise in this way, the conclusion is inescapable that the Egyptians had come from somewhere else. They had not come from Asia or Europe. Had they, with their incomparable civilization, come from the steaming jungles of black Africa or the barren deserts north of the jungle? Obviously not.

But they *had* come from the west, from the direction of Atlantis. The Egyptians themselves say that they came from Atlantis. The chronicler Sanchoniathon tells that Chronos, king of Atlantis, visited Egypt and gave it to the god Thoth "that this might be his kingdom." Thoth is credited with inventing the art of writing and may have been an actual personage later worshiped as a god.

Donnelly says: "Egypt was the magnificent, the golden bridge, ten thousand years long, glorious with temples and pyramids, illuminated and illustrated by the most complete and continuous records of human history, along with the civilization of Atlantis, in a great procession of kings and priests, philosophers and astronomers, artists and artisans, streaming forward to Greece, to Rome, to Europe and America. As far back as the eye can penetrate, even where the perspective dwindles to a point, we can still see the swarming multitudes, possessed of all the arts of the highest civilization, pressing forward from out that other and greater empire of which even this wonder-working Nile land is but a faint and imperfect copy."

If the culture of Egypt came from a land which the Egyptians called Atlantis, and its twin culture in the western hemisphere came from a land which the Aztec-Mayas called Aztlan, it is reasonable to suppose, say the adherents of the Atlantis theory, that there was once some such place.

Why, then, did the Greeks and the Romans and the other Mediterranean peoples of a later day dismiss the story of Atlantis as a myth pure and simple? The atlantologists have an answer for that one too.

The Greeks and Romans had no knowledge of the true structure of the earth. They conceived it to be a flat, fixed platform composed of indestructible continents. The report that an island as large as Asia Minor, Libya and Tyrrhenia had vanished like a thunderclap struck them as an old wives' tale. They dismissed it as impossible.

Scientists today do not dismiss it as impossible but they cling stubbornly to the theory that the destruction of Atlantis was accomplished before the human race was born.

If they are right, something pretty miraculous must have been going on in the plant world in the Atlantean age. Plants which are today wholly domestic, with no wild ancestry, must have had the power to uproot themselves, travel tens of thousands of miles across oceans and mountains, and reëstablish themselves in such widely separated areas as South America and East Asia. Among these would be the Spanish red pepper, the tomato, the bamboo, the guava, the mango and the banana. Actually, of course, it is impossible that any of these made the journey across the world without an assist from human beings.

The banana is one of the star witnesses to this fact. The banana is seedless, yet it is found in Asia, Africa, and America, *where it is not a native plant.* It is not only seedless, but it cannot be transplanted by cuttings and it has no bulbs. It cannot be introduced from one locale to another unless the entire plant is transferred.

Confronted with the banana, the best that the scientists have been able to deduce is that it must have been brought to America in prehistoric times by way of the Arctic. They prefer this to the more probable theory that it was brought to Central America from Atlantic land masses where it grew in great profusion. To admit this, however, would be to admit the existence of an inhabited land bridge in the Atlantic some thousands, not millions of years ago.

This they somewhat angrily refuse to do, and the very word "Atlantis" is a fighting word in some quarters, because it would substitute a rational explanation for the highly dubious theories now held as to the origin of the American Indian.

A distinguished naturalist of the American Museum of Natural History recently described the theory of Atlantis, in his book on mankind, as "a hoary hoax" with "not a single particle of tangible evidence to lend it credibility."

In the light of all the foregoing, the assertion that there is not a particle of evidence to support the theory of Atlantis is on a par with declaring in the middle of a fish market that there is nowhere any credible evidence of the existence of water.

The same authority also declared categorically that there is not and never has been a white race of pre-Columbian origin in the western hemisphere. Apparently he does not consider the Paria of Venezuela a white race. This might be debatable, but almost any reader of newspaper Sunday supplements could refer him to the white Indians of Darien in Central America, those descendants of the Toltecs who to this day wear an Egyptian style of headdress and resemble the ancient inhabitants of the Valley of the Nile.

Atlantis the Golden may never have existed, but it is not necessary to swallow Plato or Ignatius Donnelly whole to conclude that there *is* evidence of the most convincing character that there was once a civilization outside the Pillars of Hercules which had developed a culture in advance of other peoples of the earth, and that this culture penetrated to the far corners of the world.

The answer to the riddle lies at the bottom of the Atlantic, one thousand fathoms deep in volcanic silt on Dolphin Ridge, just off the Azores. That no expedition has ever been sent to investigate it is due entirely to the readiness of the scientific world to dismiss the theory of Atlantis, without investigation, as just another heavily embroidered Greek myth.

With modern equipment it should be possible to dredge up some of the silt which covers Dolphin Ridge and examine it for the fragment of masonry, the sliver of orichalcum, or the inscribed tablet which would settle the age-old controversy once and for all.

Nothing has been done since Ignatius Donnelly wrote sixty-nine years ago:

"Who shall say that one hundred years from now the great museums of the world may not be adorned with gems, statues, arms and implements from Atlantis, while the libraries of the world shall contain translations of its inscriptions, throwing new light on the past history of the human race?"

Bonehead

He was not clever; but clever boxers who ventured into the ring with him became unhappy.

by JOEL REEVE

MOIRA O'TOOLE was small, dark and determined. She was dressed in a summer frock which, although simple in design, was amazingly alluring. Her legs were tanned, and she wore flat-heeled slippers which did not disguise the fact that her calves were rounded and shapely, and her hair hung in waves to her seductive shoulders.

Wally Stout was blond and sturdy, and his blue eyes were wide-spaced, innocent under arched brows whitened by the sun. He wore freckles across a slightly dented nose. He was obviously miserable.

They sat in a fly-specked lunchroom, and through the glass dimly they could see part of Main Avenue. This was Blyville, a manufacturing town, a thriving community in the hills through which ran the swift river roiled with refuse; there was a pall over Blyville filled with black particles and bad odors belched from high chimneys. No aspect of Blyville was idyllic.

Moira said: "How do you get yourself in such messes? Why do you have to be a prize-fighter? And if you are a prize-fighter, why don't you have a manager to keep you out of trouble?"

Wally Stout said: "Managers just take your money. I was only trying to make some quick money. This Killer Katz sent me an offer by wire. It was a good offer. I had been doing well, Moira." He straightened proudly. "I knocked over two, three good boys in a row. I had plenty of offers." He dropped his head, staring at the soiled tile table top. "Killer Katz offered me five hundred to go ten with him. In the ball-park. How was I to know?"

She sighed. "You never know. Freddy Quackenbush, who runs a gents' furnishing store, knew about Killer Katz. You didn't know."

He said dourly: "Just because I'm a boxer. . . . Freddy looks things up. That encyclopedia! Always spoutin'!"

She said: "It's a good thing he looked up Killer Katz. Your mother is frantic. I came on the first plane when I heard about it."

"You shouldn't have come," he muttered, not looking at her. "You should've stayed with Freddy Quackenbush."

"I know it." She nodded vigorously. "I should marry Freddy. He's a solid, substantial citizen. I may marry him this autumn. He's asked me often enough. . . . But I'm here. Because you're in trouble."

Wally Stout said: "Well, you can leave. It's not going to be pretty. Killer Katz owns this burg. He owns this very lunchroom. He owns nightclubs, part of the ball-park. The Chief of Police is his cousin, or something. He wants to be champion, and he gets fighters in here, and then he tells them what to do. Either they take a dive, or they have very bad things happen to them. One guy tried to cross him, and Killer beat him in the last round, and then had him arrested and sent to jail."

"Wally, what are your orders?"

He said miserably: "I'm supposed to go five rounds."

She thought about it. She said: "You can't take it easy in the ring. If you try to go five rounds without hurting the other man, you will be killed. You're no boxer."

Wally said: "I suppose Freddy told you that, too."

"I asked the sports editor," she said firmly. "And I've seen you in action, remember?"

He winced. He had been knocked out regularly in the home town until they would not give him any more matches, and he had to take to the road. He said: "That was two years ago."

She nodded. "Freddy wanted me to marry him then. I wonder why I didn't. I wonder why I'm here. It's not because I'm in love with you, Wally Stoutenburg, that's for sure!"

"I know it," he said meekly.

"Changing your name, running all over the country. And now this—this mess."

He said: "I know, Moira. You've picked me up too often. That's why I never wrote or anything." He looked very young and helpless, squirming on his chair.

She said: "Now, don't get that way." She shook her head, frowning. It was difficult to concentrate, sometimes, when Wally got that way. He seemed so lost, so like a baby.

Even in high school, where she had been two classes behind him, and he had been captain of the football team, it had been necessary to help him. He could never master mathematics. His English was execrable. He could remember history, and biology and things like that were easy for him. She had begun helping him then.

Then he had played professional football, and the coach never did use him right, and she had rehearsed assignments with him until he knew them backward and even had invented a bootleg play which had won over the coach. But the team had broken up for lack of customers; and then it had been prize-fighting. She had learned football, but boxing was a little beyond her. Then Wally had suffered one too many defeats and had left town, and her friends—and Freddy Quackenbush—had sighed in relief.

And now, here she was again! Blyville disconcerted her and frightened her a little, but here she was, determined to be of help. She said: "It's wrong to take a dive. It's illegal, too. Something must be done."

Wally said: "He's got a regular gang—and the police. Everyone is scared of him, Moira. Everyone. I think even the Chief is scared of him. I couldn't even run out of town—he wouldn't let me."

She said: "Everyone's scared of him, huh?"

"Plenty scared," nodded Wally. "You check around. You'll find out."

SHE looked at him a long moment, scrutinizing him carefully, examining the carriage of his head, the look in his eyes. She knew him so well—she had always known him, it seemed. After a while she nodded. She said: "I'll check around, Wally. I'm at the Blyville Hotel. Maybe we'd better not be seen around together. I'll look into things."

He said: "This is a tough town, Moira. Be careful, will you?" He was pleading with her. He could not stop her. He had never been able to prevent her from doing what she thought should be done. He did not try now, because of this knowledge of her, but he was worried.

She said: "You be careful. I've got your number. I'll call you."

She walked out of the lunchroom, her heels clicking, head high. He watched her until she was out of sight in the unlovely murk of early evening. He could have wept a little if he had been a weeping man, but he swallowed hard, paid for the terrible coffee and went toward the boarding-house where Killer had insisted he stay—so that Killer's men could watch him.

This was the worst jam of all, he knew. This could finish him. He had been going very well, as he had told Moira, but this could finish him in the boxing business—or get him crippled if he did the wrong thing.

It was bad to be such a bonehead. He sighed, walking through the streets, head down, hands jammed in pockets. He had thought the ring business one place where his lack of acumen would not count against him. He had not known there were such men as Killer Katz.

FREDDY QUACKENBUSH had taught Moira one thing: Freddy was, as Wally said, a great hand for looking things up. One of his favorite sources of information was the newspaper office in the home town, where he had sometimes taken Moira for an excursion through the back files in search of some irrelevant and unimportant fact which at the moment was intriguing Freddy's interest.

She went into the Blyville *Star* building and stood at the door of the city room, wondering if she could pick out the sports editor. A small man with a wry face and cynical eyes walked quickly toward her and paused a moment, looking her up and down. He said: "They don't hire dames on this sheet. I could buy you a drink, though."

She said: "I don't drink. I want to talk to someone who isn't afraid of Killer Katz."

The man shrugged. "My name's Jerry Flannagan—and everybody is scared of Killer Katz."

"My name's Moira O'Toole, and I'm not scared of him," she said. "I want to meet Katz and look him over."

"You don't want to meet him," said the little man. He wore unpressed tweeds which were very unbecoming, but his hands were clean and manicured. "Not if you want to stay unscared of him."

She said: "You know him?"

"Yeah, I know him. I'm the sports expert for this rag." Flannagan sneered heartily. "I hear he has got this Stout boy all lined up for slaughter in the fifth. Anything else you would like to know?"

She said patiently: "I'm not looking for inside dope on the fight. I just want to meet Katz and make up my mind about him. Then I will know what to do."

"It's all right, Moira. If they don't count him out, I'll prob'ly have to kill him. He just threatened to have me killed."

"Wally's not clever but you should see what he does to clever boxers!"

Flannagan said: "The thing to do is stay away from him, have a drink—you can have coffee—with me, then get out of town."

She said: "You like Katz?"

"Nobody likes him, Miss O'Toole," said Flannagan flatly. "They are scared of him."

She nodded. "All right. I'll have coffee with you. We'll talk."

A half-hour later, in the grill of the Blyville Hotel, Jerry Flannagan was saying: "It can't be done. Katz will slaughter your boy, then have him thrown in the can if he don't dive when he was told to dive."

She explained again: "Wally doesn't know how to dive."

"Then he'll be killed."

She pushed back her coffee cup. She said: "I had an idea that maybe you weren't really frightened of Katz. I was wrong, I see."

The little man lit a cigarette. Smoke curled around his deep-set small eyes. He said: "You weren't wrong. I'm a drifter, see? I came in here six months ago. I've been watching this Katz. I've been wondering how he did it. He's a toughy. He just spread himself, little by little. He's a young guy, but he owns a lot. He's a fellow could grow to be a great trouble in the State. And his whole system is—rule by fear."

She nodded. "That's what I figured."

Flannagan's speech became slower, clearer. "Men like Katz build on fear. They give away free booze to hoodlums; then they find jobs, soft jobs, for other types. They put together a string of sycophants who depend on them for some easy graft. They elect an alderman—a district leader. . . . This Killer Katz happens to be a very good prize-fighter with a brain. The sports fans accept him, as they do all athletes, as a great character. From there he branches out. If I were civic-minded—which heaven forbid—I would feel it necessary to take steps to scotch Killer Katz before he got any bigger."

She said: "You newspaper men—" She shook her head.

"What do you know about newspaper men?" he demanded.

She told him of Freddy Quackenbush, and how while Freddy delved in back files, she had talked to the men on the rim, to the city editor and the copy boys and the sports men on the home-town sheet. She always talked to people, she said, maybe because she was nosy, but anyway, her folks said she had never met a stranger, and she supposed that was true. . . .

"You're one of the people," he nodded. For the first time he smiled broadly at her. "This Freddy Quackenbush—what an unlikely name! You're going to marry him?"

"I don't know," she said frankly. "I'm here to get Wally Stoutenburg—Stout—out of a jam. I need help."

Flannagan stubbed out his cigarette. He said: "I'll take you out to the Barracuda Club and show you Killer Katz. Then maybe you will go back home and marry Freddy Quackenbush." He wagged his head. "Is there really a man named Freddy Quackenbush?"

She said: "You ought to buy your clothes from him. Honestly, a slight, short man like you shouldn't wear tweeds."

"*Touché*," murmured Flannagan. "Face it, I never was a natty dresser." He led her out of the hotel and put her in a taxicab.

THE Barracuda Club was on the edge of town. It was a busy place. The food was good, and Flannagan had a couple of drinks, which had no effect upon him whatsoever, Moira saw. A floor show came on, and they watched it. Then Killer Katz came in with a few cronies, who surrounded him as though guarding his person against attack.

He was taller than Wally Stout, and heavier in the shoulders. His eyes were set very close to either side of his flattened nose. He was swarthy and swaggering, but the air of authority which he carried was not spurious. His face was lean and bony, without fleshy overtones. Moira could see why people were afraid of this strong, confident man.

She was conscious of his attention, and for a moment her breath caught in her throat. Then she realized Katz was staring at Flannagan. After his party was seated, the fighter turned and walked across the floor and paused, staring down at them.

Flannagan said: "My cousin, Moira O'Toole. . . . Mr. Katz."

The narrow eyes flicked over her, went back to Flannagan. Katz said: "I see you're callin' the round, pal. That's takin' a big stand out on a limb, ain't it?"

Flannagan said: "I call them the way I see them. The fifth, I said. I'm wrong, maybe?"

"You haven't been around this town long enough," said Katz. His smile was frosted without mirth. "Callin' the round don't go so good. People from out o' town might get ideas."

"You think so, Killer?" Flannagan was grinning too, Moira realized, in the same manner as the fighter.

"I know so. . . . You can do another column tomorrow. This fight ought to go the limit. This boy, this Stout, knocked over Sammy Stone, Norman Traudt, Dancer Jones. He ought to go the limit. It ought to be a very good fight."

"Like that, huh, Killer?"

"It'd make a nice column," said Katz. "I wouldn't be crazy about it, you understand. But it would make me forget the other one."

"It would, huh, Killer?" Flannagan's grin was steady.

Katz said: "Maybe. Come to think of it, just maybe it would make me forget."

He nodded at Moira, giving her another up-and-down survey with his quick, shuttling eyelids operating like window shades. Then he walked slowly back to his party like a man who has just performed a duty of grave import. Two or three heads went snakelike toward him. He muttered something, and the heads swiveled toward Moira and Flannagan, then jerked angrily away.

She said: "Now you're in trouble, too."

"You had nothing to do with it," said Flannagan. "I shouldn't have written the column. These boys of his—they leak. Killer's young at this business. He hasn't got perfect organization yet. He's mad because I found out the round he'd picked for Stout to go into the tank. He'll switch it now, to prove I was wrong. Your boy will get to go eight at least now."

Moira said: "Don't you see that's worse? Wally can't fence around like a smooth boxer. The more rounds he stays, the worse it will be for him."

Flannagan nodded. "Yep. . . . Well, you've met Killer Katz. Now what about it?"

She said: "Wally's in trouble. You're in trouble. Everybody is scared of the man who causes the trouble. It looks like a real problem, doesn't it?"

"Have you any ideas—cousin?" asked Flannagan.

She said: "Can you get us out of town after the fight?"

He debated. He said, half to himself: "So what? What do I owe Blyville? What am I doing here? . . . Of course I can get you out. If your boy's able to move, I can sneak you out. Only Katz might get the State troopers after us on a trumped-up charge."

She said: "Will you take a chance? I'll pay for it."

Flannagan lit another cigarette. "What have I got to lose? I'm marked lousy anyway."

She said: "All right, then. . . . Get me a ticket near the press row. Have a car ready. I'll try to do the rest."

Flannagan said thoughtfully: "That Freddy Quackenbush is a guy who is either very lucky—or very doomed—according to whether he can take it."

"Never mind Freddy Quackenbush," she said absently. "Let's see. . . . I have two days. . . . Oh, dear, if I only knew as much about boxing as I had to learn about that old football!"

MEN stared at her askance, but she determinedly waited at the foot of the ramp which led to the dressing-rooms. When Wally came out, sweating a little from his shadow-boxing for the warm-up, the towel around his head, the two handlers provided by Jerry Flannagan, hard-faced on either side of him, she went forward.

In the shadows he said to her: "You're right, Moira. You're always right." He was edgy and nervous in his motions, moving his feet and his hands, towering over her. "I wish—"

She said: "Don't fret, Wally. Just do as we planned. Remember, I'll be right there watching you."

He said: "I'm always getting things wrong. But it's not because I don't mean to do right, Moira."

She said softly: "You big dumb goat, go in there and show them."

He grinned suddenly: "That's what I like. When you call me names. That makes me feel good." He waved bandaged hands at her, and trotted obediently out through the opening and onto the field.

She followed. There was some smattering of applause, but the crowd was saving its ovation for Killer Katz, the home-town pride, the man who always won. She went down the aisle and slid into the seat assigned to her. Jerry Flannagan did not turn his head. He was down at the edge of the ring, a portable typewriter on a plank before him. Other sports-writers were there, but she saw only Flannagan.

The park was filled. People had come from around and about the State, because these were big men, and everyone wanted to see the heavies, always, Flannagan had said. There were a lot of policemen around, and the Chief wore a mustache and looked stoutly competent—Killer Katz's cousin or something, the Chief, she remembered.

There were hard-faced men, a couple she remembered from the Barracuda Club, and the glances they threw at Flannagan were murderous. The *Star* had carried a column that day which meant the end of Flannagan in Blyville.

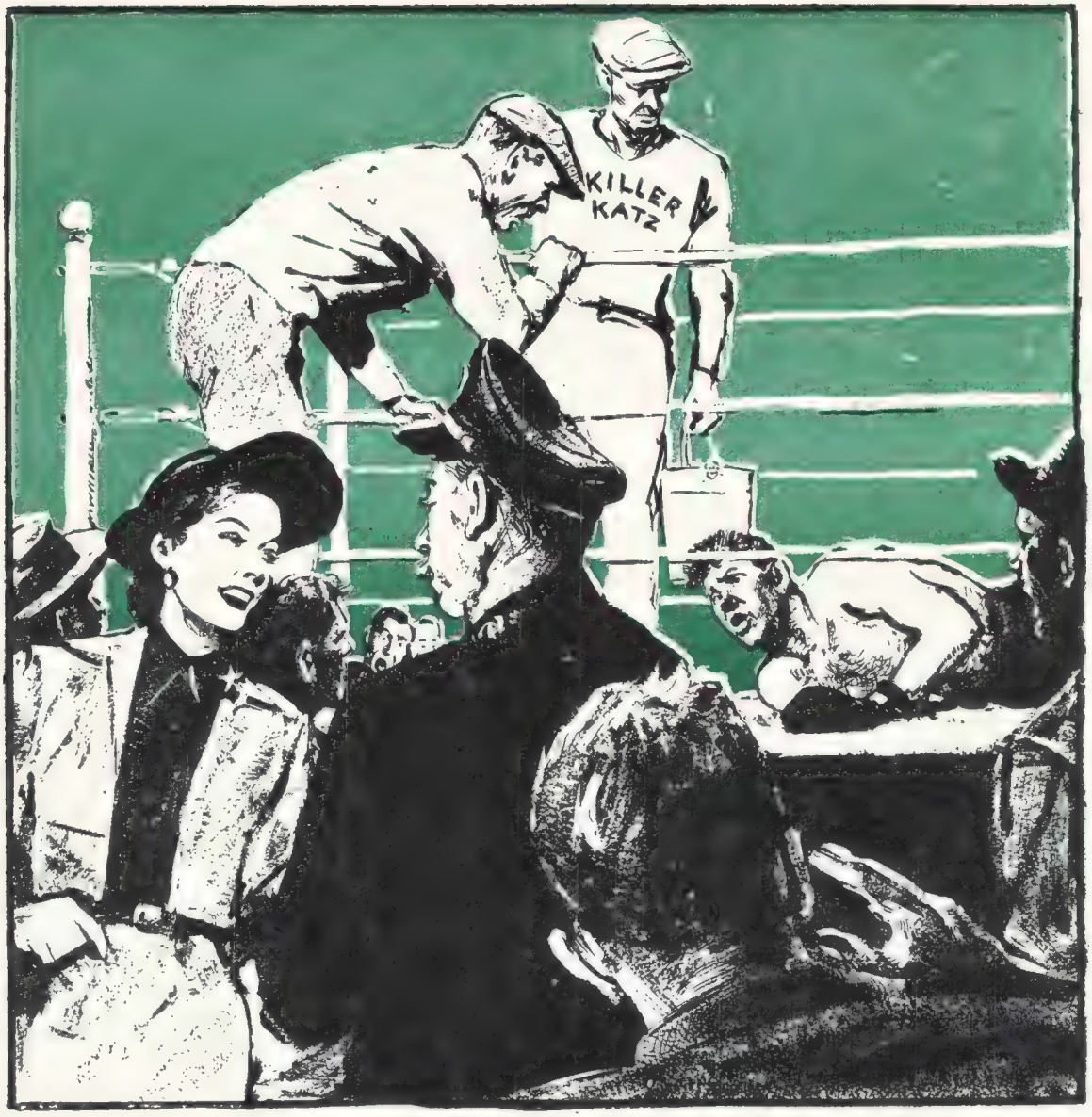
The little sports-writer must have been bursting with it when she braced him, she thought. Going to the newspaper had been the real stroke of genius. Freddy Quackenbush was right about that.

Freddy would be hanging around, waiting for the teletype report on the bout. There was no broadcast, of course, nothing big. This was just the main bout in a small-town ball-park, a one-liner item in small type at the bottom of the sports pages of the country. But Freddy would be checking—and wondering.

Freddy knew she was here. Wally's mother knew it, and her own folks. They could not understand it. They never could. She just told them Wally was in trouble and she had to go, and that was that. It never occurred to her that there was anything strange about it.

She sat, hugging herself, watching Killer Katz climb through the ropes, listening to the thunder of the mob. He was a hairy, sinewy man when he stripped for action. Standing out

Katz's smile was frosted. "Callin' the round don't go so good. People might get ideas."



Illustrated by
O. F. SCHMIDT

"That's your cousin? He's the one who had this town scared stiff? That's your bad man?" Moira said to the chief.

there with the referee between them, it seemed that Wally was a small boy going against an adult. Wally's head was down so that she could not see his eyes as they listened to instructions.

But she did not need to see his eyes, she knew. The excitement rising within her was over and beyond the trepidation, the suspense engendered by the situation in Blyville. It stemmed from the thing she had always seen in Wally, the thing she always knew about him. Flannagan's hand was shaking as he flicked his cigarette lighter, but Moira was steady enough, her brown eyes glowing, leaning forward a little, waiting.

The fighters went to their corners. The referee stepped back, waiting. The moment of waiting sped by, dragged a moment, quickened. The bell rang.

Killer Katz stepped out, his left hand extended, his head drawn back, lowered a bit. His lethal right was cocked on his matted chest; he moved sedately, yet with grace and ease. Wally wheeled from his corner, danced a moment, fair-skinned, seemingly vulnerable, his choir-boy's face harmless and blank under the staring lights. Flannagan threw down his cigarette, shakingly lit another.

Killer Katz put out his left hand in a jab.

Wally's feet planted themselves. His body swayed, first right, then left. His shoulders sprouted muscles beneath the white skin. His gloves began a rapid rataplan. Head down, Wally went to the attack.

Katz threw the hard right hand. Moving back, scowling, he laid on the left, threw the right again. Both punches landed.

Wally bled a little. His lips curled back from the mouthpiece. He suddenly did not look so young and helpless.

The brown gloves curved. Little short hooks went winging into the iron ribs and the washboard middle of Katz. Wally's shoulder hunched, and a long, sweeping right hand came whizzing overhead. It swooped down. It cut into Katz's face, knocking him sidewise.

Again Katz steadied himself, trying to box. He went close, grabbed Wally, roughly swung him to the ropes, talking past his mouthpiece. Wally gave him the football hip, knocked him clean across the ring. The referee shouted.

Wally back-handed the referee out of reach. A cop jumped up at ringside. Flannagan, come to life, leaped and yelled at the policeman to keep out of there.

Moira was standing, moving closer to the ring, her little fists in tight balls. Katz was bouncing off the ropes. He knew how to hit; he knew the tricks. Wally was neither deft nor clever.

Blood ran faster from Wally's eye. But the blond head bobbed, the feet carried Wally ahead. His gloves

drove with lightning speed, some of them missing the mark, some of them blocked, some of them landing. Katz showed a splotch on his body. Katz's nose ran gore.

Again Katz tried to get close. Wally shrugged him off like a dog shaking water from his hide. Wally laughed and threw a wild right which caught Katz high on the head.

The Killer went sidewise, stumbled. He lit on his back and rolled half out of the ring. The referee bent to haul him back. Flannagan was bellowing: "Count that man out! Start counting!"

Wally turned, saw that the official was not starting the count. He walked back and stood behind the man. Killer Katz came up, glassy-eyed, open-mouthed. Wally brushed past the referee.

Katz began to run. He had never trained himself to run backward, and his retreat was ungainly. Wally sidestepped, trapped him on the ropes. Wally's fists beat their relentless message against body and head. Katz bent at the middle. His knees buckled.

Wally gleefully rammed home a right to the jaw, a left to the nose, a right to the chin. Katz slumped. Wally stepped back and let him fall. Katz, a bloody wreck, flopped meaninglessly around on the canvas. The frightened referee stooped to peer at him.

Someone rang a bell. Wally, still laughing derisively, raised a hand at the roaring crowd and walked to his corner. The two handlers threw a sponge at him; one applied collodion to his eye. Wally did not sit down during this procedure, but remained standing, leaning on the ropes, talking past the shoulders of his seconds.

Wally said: "It's all right, Moira. If they don't count him out, I'll prob'ly have to kill him, but that's all right too. He just threatened to have me killed."

Flannagan had Moira by the elbow, squeezing so hard it hurt, even through the excitement. He said: "Everything's ready. . . . If he can only stop Katz cold in this round. . . . This kid is magnificent! I never saw anything like this kid! This kid will be champion!"

"I suppose so," sighed Moira. She was looking at the Chief of Police, at others about the ring. She went back to her seat, and when the second round started she was still looking at them.

Katz got to his feet. He tried to box. Wally stormed out of his corner and across the ring and fired both barrels.

Katz went down. He did not get up. He did not essay to do other than lie gap-mouthed, disbelieving, wrecked upon the floor. He could have risen. Everyone in the ball-park knew that. Wally's violence lacked killing skill. But Killer wasn't having any more. Killer was resigning from any further doings against Wally Stout in that ring on that night. . . .

Moira stood beside the Chief of Police. She said in a low voice as the crowd's noise swelled: "That's your cousin? He's the one who had this town scared stiff? That's your bad man?"

The mustache turned toward her. The Chief's face was slightly scarlet. He said: "And we got your hired car, too. Flannagan's hired car, that is."

She said: "Why, Chief, I'm not even leaving town until Wally gets paid off by that cheap false alarm. Why, Chief, he *quit*."

A large man sitting beyond the Chief said: "He did, at that, Clarry. The bum dogged it. This boy beat him to death, and he quit."

Flannagan was beside her, his quick eyes taking it all in. He snapped: "I'm not leaving town, either. I want to see how you take this, you pals of Katz's. I want to see who he'll have scared to death now."

The Chief said: "Okay, Flannagan, okay. Just don't mention me in your damned column. . . . Beggin' your pardon, Miss. . . . Don't worry about Stout gettin' paid, either. He'll be paid. And—" He struggled for dignity, found a modicum of it. "And Katz is *not* my cousin. It just happened a cousin of mine married his sister."

The next day there was five hundred dollars, in cash, and they sat in Moira's room, celebrating mildly—Moira, Flannagan and Wally. The telephone rang.

She said: "Hello. . . . Freddy? Oh, yes, Freddy, it's all right. Wally won, and we're going to New York and box in the big clubs. . . . What? . . . Well, of course—"

She turned and hunched her shoulders at her companions. The voice on the other end of the wire went on and on. She waited patiently, then said into a pause: "I know, Freddy. . . . Many fighters wind up punch-drunk, and Wally is not clever. . . . But you should see what Wally does to clever boxers!"

Again the voice raved and ranted.

When she could break in again she said gently: "Freddy, listen: Remember the football games, when we were behind, and then Wally would get started? Remember? You used to jump up and down and yell louder than anyone, and get your eyeglasses all steamed up, and I would have to tell you when Wally scored the winning touchdown? Remember? . . . Well, he's still the same Wally—and I still jump up and down!"

She hung up the telephone with a firm hand. She said: "I'll have to call my folks, and your mother, of course. The Chief has it all fixed for the Mayor to marry us this afternoon. Jerry will be the cutest best man in that new suit I picked out for him."

Flannagan chuckled: "Wally, you haven't got a chance. You're a dead duck. She says marry her—you marry her."

Wally said: "Well, gee whiz, that's what I always wanted. Only I'm such a bonehead, and Freddy Quackenbush is smart and pretty rich, and what could I do?"

"You did all right, didn't you?" demanded Flannagan.

"Well, gee, that's right, ain't it?" Wally beamed.

Flannagan said: "What's on your mind now, little Moira, you frail flower?"

She frowned. "I knew they'd all back down when they saw someone who wasn't scared to take their hero apart. But do you think Killer Katz will come back? Can't he just start over and do the same thing to other people?"

Flannagan said: "Not while the *Star* and the Chief of Police and the Mayor—did you know he was the stout party you yakked at last night, the Mayor? Not while they're against him. Remember—they never did like him. They were just scared of him."

Moira said with relief: "Then we can go on to New York, and when we make enough money, we can go home to live."

"Yes," said Flannagan. "I would call that a nice, conservative life plan. . . . Now come, my children, for the Mayor is waiting."

She said: "Oh, my goodness, I haven't bought a new thing to be married in. . . . And those phone calls!"

Flannagan said: "It delights me that you are not perfection, because I am too small to go against this Wally, and if you were any more exciting, it would be necessary for me to do so. Bring her along, son. Just tote her on out!"

Wally said: "Hey, that's a good one. Come on, darling, come to Papa." He put her under one arm with great ease while Flannagan held open the door. . . .

It was a bit undignified, but Moira shook her hip into a comfortable position and let him carry her to the elevator. It was perfectly satisfactory to have a husband who could perform such a feat beneath the admiring eye of Jerry Flannagan, that sharp character.

But she was glad Wally did not have Flannagan's brains. It would be too much. . . . She was happy just the way things were.

Coffee and—

A difficult murder mystery solved by a detective whose millionaire patron is making him famous

by DAVID ALEXANDER

Illustrated by Charles Chickering

TOMMY TWOTOES, the three-hundred-pound millionaire penguin-fancier, entered the office of Terry Bob Rooke, Private Investigator, on the loglike arm of old Killer Carney, the punch-drunk, rumdum former heavyweight who was now a Bowery bum. Maybe I should explain right off that I'm Rooke, better known to my friends as "Soldier," and that my agency was subsidized by the slightly fantastic Mr. Twotoes when he began to fancy himself as a criminologist in the twilight of his hectic life, and figured he needed a front for his latest hobby.

To describe Mr. Twotoes as eccentric is to lapse into euphemism. Mr. Twotoes had been everything from a skid-row vagrant to a multimillionaire during the seventy-odd years of his intensely alcoholic existence. Among other things, he had promoted the fights of some of the greatest boxers of his time, which is one of the reasons he was acquainted with such characters as Killer Carney. The private detective agency for which I held the license was just one of his numerous conceits. He had a herd, or maybe I should say a covey, of penguins housed in an especially refrigerated miniature Antarctic on his estate in Tarrytown. Mr. Twotoes maintained you could learn a great deal about human beings from the study of penguins, since he claimed these flightless birds from the polar regions were the most completely amoral and unchristian of all living creatures.

The Killer, who supported the enormous, crippled Mr. Twotoes on his sturdy arm, was something of a character in his own right. As a result of old batterings and raw booze, he'd been on the Bowery for years. When he wasn't panhandling coffee money, he was engaged in baby-sitting for tenement mothers who couldn't afford the union wage scale of the Baby-sitters Local. Sometimes the Killer was paid a few nickels for his time, and sometimes he was rewarded with homemade wine or a dish of spaghetti; but more often he pursued his odd profession through sheer love of the work.

As he entered the office, Tommy was smoking his queerly wrought pipe, the bowl of which was fashioned in the shape of a nude woman. He took the pipe from his mouth, exuded billowing smoke, and boomed in his foghorn voice:

"Soldier! Have you made arrangements for Lieutenant Romano to receive us?"

Lieutenant Romano was an old buddy of Tommy's who was now attached to the Homicide squad. That morning Tommy had called me to say that Killer Carney had burst into his home in Tarrytown, panic-stricken, and that the broken-down old pug had important information in connection with the town's latest murder, in which a middle-aged college professor named Stephen Dean was being held for the poison slaying of his beautiful young wife.

I said: "The Lieutenant is awaiting us, and you could have saved yourself a trip up in the elevator. If you've got the Rolls outside, we can drive right downtown. But how did a character like the Killer get mixed up with a college professor and a murder in Mulberry Mews?"

"You will hear in good time," said Tommy, "when the Killer tells his

"But how did a character like the Killer get mixed up with a college professor and a murder?"

unusual story to Lieutenant Romano. In the meantime, we will pause for refreshment."

Tommy produced a blue crock of French brandy from a cavernous pocket of his coat; I produced glasses, and we all had a drink. After that I helped Killer Carney to the elevator and out into the street with the old man, who was so crippled from alcoholic neuritis that putting one foot in front of the other posed a problem for him. Ebony Black, the gigantic Negro who had lost an eye when he was a heavyweight in Tommy's stable, now acted as bodyguard and chauffeur for Mr. Twotoes. Ebony, clad in plum-colored livery, sat at the wheel of the Rolls Royce, which was parked directly in front of a fireplug. The antediluvian vehicle was so familiar on New York's streets, and its owner was so well known to the police, that Ebony Black was contemptuous of such small matters as traffic regulations.

Mr. Twotoes was always nervous when he was riding, and would permit his chauffeur to proceed at a speed of no more than thirty miles an hour, even on deserted country roads. During our ride down to Manhattan West Headquarters of Homicide on Twentieth Street, my penguin-fancying patron nearly suffered a nervous collapse as the car swerved suddenly.

"Sorry, boss," apologized Ebony, "but a ol' dog almost run under the wheels—ain't nothing makes me feel so poorly as hurting a dumb animal."

MR. TWOTOES, whose doughy moon of a face was even paler than usual, did not answer, but revived himself with a long pull at the blue crock. This time he did not pass it to me or the Killer, however.

"Professor Dean, he was a animal-lover, too," said the Killer. "His house was full of animals, it was."

"Killer," I said, "do you mean to tell me you visited the renovated stable in that sublimated alley in Greenwich Village where Professor Dean has his residence? You're moving in swanky circles these days."

"It ain't no stable," declared the Killer. "It's just a little brick house with kind of a concrete garden out in back. And it ain't in no alley, either. It's in what you call a mews, maybe because they got a lot of cats in it. A mews," explained the Killer, "is a kind of little court which has a lot of trees growing out of boxes in it."

WE reached the Manhattan West station and found Romano, the cop with the classic profile, sitting at a battered desk with a green-shaded light on it, and looking sour, like a man who always expects the worst and is seldom disappointed. He nodded at us.

"Yeah," he said, when Tommy started to introduce the Dean murder witness. "I know the Killer. He was one of the characters around and about your place when I was investigating the Danise Darlan killing last year."

"He has important information for you, Lieutenant," said Tommy as we lowered his bulk into the stoutest-looking chair in the office.

"Please don't be doing me favors," said Romano. "I got a clean-cut case of poisoning that is all wrapped up in tissue paper and pretty ribbons and ready to deliver to the D.A. for his birthday. This fellow Dean's young wife dies right after she and he have drunk a cup of coffee. Seems her cup was loaded with a little cyanide. Coffee *and*, you might say. Seems the Professor's wife, who's about twenty years younger than he is, has been playing around with a pretty-boy artist named Porter, so we got motive. Seems the only alibi the Professor has is a witness who he claims drank coffee with 'em. We found another cup with fingerprints we couldn't identify, but that could easily have been a plant. The Professor claims this witness is a vag he's picked up and asked in for coffee at his nice little house—a very likely story indeed.

"The Professor claims this vag can testify his wife made the coffee, poured it out into three cups in the house, and brought the cups out to them in the garden. The Professor also says this vag can testify he told his wife he suspected her of trying to poison him so that she could inherit his insurance and marry Pretty Boy Porter, and that he challenged her to drink the coffee she'd prepared for him in an extra-big cup he always used. He says they had a heated argument over this, and that finally his wife grabs the big cup and drinks it down before he can stop her, and drops dead. He says the missing vag can testify to the truth of all this. Only trouble is, the vag lams the minute his wife comes down with a hard case of the death throes."

The Lieutenant scratched his classic Roman nose. "So I've got a perfect case until you come along and do me favors by producing the only witness who can knock the whole case to hell and gone."

He stared at the Killer with his brooding, liquid Italian eyes, and the Killer looked uncomfortable.

"How you ever happen to tell the Professor your name is Vanderlip?" he asked the Killer.

The Killer said: "Cecil Vanderlip was a pug which went nine rounds with me oncet when I was good. The name just come into my mind like that. Vanderlip seemed like a name which would please the Professor. The Professor had class."

The Killer looked guilty. He was sweating. "I don't never give nobody my right name if I can help it," he explained.

Tommy said to Romano: "Before the Killer tells his story, you are due an explanation as to why he did not come forward at once, as to why he left the scene of the crime, in which he was in no way involved, somewhat precipitately. The Killer is a derelict. To him, and to all his kind, the police are natural enemies. It has been half a century or more since I feared the police, but I can understand the Killer's attitude. I trod skid row of the San Francisco that existed before the fire, and I avoided the company of cops, just as the Killer and his cohorts do today. The Killer had no intention of withholding evidence, but he did not wish to involve himself with the police, since his standing in the community is somewhat ambiguous. He fled to me for advice. Being a law-abiding citizen, I have brought him to you."

I had to chuckle at Mr. Twotoes' description of himself as a law-abiding citizen. A good part of his fortune stemmed from Prohibition days, when he was reputed to have been the master-mind behind one of the largest and most profitable of the rum-running syndicates. But Mr. Twotoes held that Prohibition was an onerous and unnatural law, and he deemed himself a public benefactor in assisting his fellow-citizens to flout the Eighteenth Amendment.

ROMANO sighed patiently, like a man who has conditioned himself to the acceptance of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. He called a stenographer and said to Killer Carney: "Tell your story, please."

The Killer said:

"Well, it's thisaway. Yesterday morning I ain't even got jingling in my jeans and I got to make a brace, and the Bowery ain't so popular as it used to be with tourists, so touches ain't easy there. So I'm a little off my beat. I'm on Bleecker, which is usually all right for bracing stale rolls off bakeries, but ain't much good for a flop-stake or a booze-stake. Anyway, I'm figuring I'll work my way up to Washington Square, because at this time of day there is usually a lot of ladies with babies there, and sometimes if you goo-goo at the babies, you get a dime from them. The ladies, I mean, not the babies. Also there is usually some young punks hanging around which is working steady and killing their lunch hours, and some of them are marks which will maybe spring two-bits.

"But I am still on Bleecker when I see this mark, which is dressed too good for the place where he is walking. This well-dressed guy stops and pets a little cur dog which is lying outside a grocery store; then he reaches in his pocket and takes out a piece of dog biscuit and gives it to the pup, and so I figure he must be a soft touch which is anyway good for coffee money and maybe even a flop-stake, and I brace him.

"I give him the old routine about excuse me, Mister, but couldja maybe spare a few pennies for a cuppa coffee. And he straightens up from feeding the dog the biscuit and says: 'Why, you look to me like you could use a little brandy in your coffee. A *café royale*,' he says, 'is very stimulating, don't you think?'

"I tell him that the joints I patronize do not put brandy in your coffee, in fact you are lucky if they put canned cow and sugar with flyspecks in it. He laughs, and says to come along with him, and he will see I have some coffee which is laced with brandy.

"Well, I figure I have picked myself a screwball, like one of them guys which are always walking around the Bowery with petitions in their pockets for you to sign, so I say: 'Where do we get this coffee with the slug in it, Mister?'

"And he tells me: 'Well, I had thought it might be pleasant for us to go to my house over in Mulberry Mews, which is not far from here, and have our coffee and brandy in the garden, as it is a pleasant day, but I would like to walk around a bit first, and I would like to talk to you. However,' he says, 'I can see your need for refreshment is urgent, so let us drop into this place on the corner.'

"This place on the corner is called the San Remo, and it is a bar which has a big machine for making Italian coffee at one end which is as big as a Diesel engine. This machine explodes and sputters a few times, and the bartender gets some coffee out of it; then he gets some brandy out of a bottle and pours it into the coffee, and it is very refreshing, although I would personally have just as lief settle for a boilermaker at Grogan's Elite Palace Café and Bar on the Bowery. Well, we have two of these fancy drinks, and he introduces himself to me very politely as Professor Dean, and I tell him I am Cecil Vanderlip because that is the first name which pops into my head, and besides it seems appropriate under the circumstances. The Professor asks me if he might have the pleasure of my company for a stroll around the streets, and says that afterwards we can go to his house for more of the same we have been having, only better, because he owns some rare old Napoleon brandy. I do not figure how I have anything to lose, as he has not asked me to sign any petitions or even gone into the old routine about how did I become what I am, so I do not tell him anything at all about myself, not even that I am once a heavyweight who was good enough to get his fights promoted by the famous Tommy Twotoes.

"WE walk up MacDougal Street but do not get very far very fast, because Professor Dean is a great animal lover, and MacDougal Street is almost as full of animals as it is of people, and it is very full of people. The Professor stops to stroke the cats and regrets that he has no milk for them to drink. He feeds dog biscuits to half a dozen mutts in every block. He even stops and pats the nose of a bony old horse which he addresses as 'Percy' and which is hitched to a vegetable wagon. He puts his hand in his pocket, but I guess he is out of fodder and horses do not eat dog biscuits, because he says: 'Poor Percy, I have nothing for you today, but we will meet again tomorrow and I will bring you something nice.' Only I guess he can't keep his date with the horse account of he is in the can today.

"Finally we get to Washington Square Park, and he takes a bag of corn out of his pocket and feeds it to the pigeons. The pigeons seem to know the Professor personal, because they roost all over him until he looks like a fan dancer, and they eat corn right out of his hand. After a while we sit down on a park bench, and a minute later I nearly fall off the park bench because he says to me: 'Vanderlip,' he says, 'what would you do if your wife was trying to poison you?'

"Well, I tell him that my wife has been dead a long time but that she was a good cook and never tried to slip no rat poison into the corned beef and cabbage, and if she had of, I would of clouted her a left hook to the button which would of been a lesson to her.

"He then tells me that his wife is so young and pretty that he could not

"Poor Percy, I have nothing for you, but tomorrow I will bring you something nice."

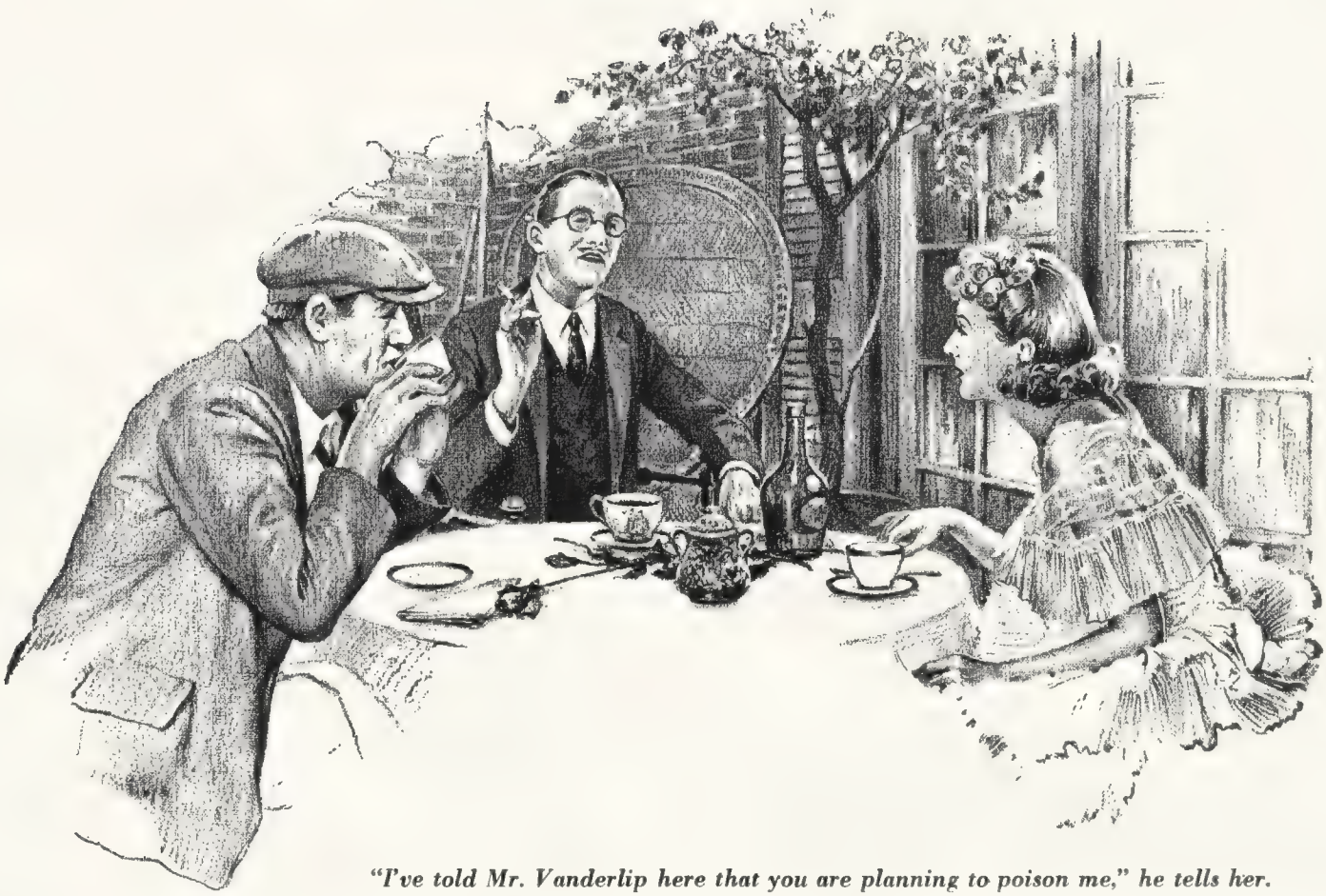
think of clouting her and risking marking her up with a busted nose or maybe a cauliflower ear. He says that his wife is in love with a young character who paints pictures and that they are planning to slip him a fast mickey and live happily ever after on the fifty gees insurance which he carries. I tell him maybe he is just imagining things, like guys on the Bowery which get the stuff in the wrong bottle and go into the rams and see lavender leopards. But he tells me this is not the case. He says he has overheard his wife and this picture painter planning to slip a jolt of bug-killer into his coffee and brandy, and he says he is in the habit of drinking coffee and brandy at all hours of the day and night, so there is plenty of opportunity for his wife to sweeten it up for him.

"Then he says that he would like very much to have coffee and brandy in the garden of his house, which is just across the park, but he would not dare to drink his wife's coffee unless a third person is present, and he asks if I will go with him. I tell him I guess there is no harm in me going if he's sure his wife won't dunk the DDT in the wrong cup. He laughs and says there's no danger of that, because he has bought a antique coffee cup for himself up on Cape Cod some years ago which is four times as big as most cups and has old sailing ships painted on it. He says he is the only one at his house which ever drinks out of this big cup. Then he slips me a stake for listening to his troubles, and it is a double-saw, twenty bucks! It is the biggest brace I ever made in my entire career on skid row, and the shape I'm in, I would of gladly drunk rat poison to get it.

"Well, this Mulberry Mews where he lives is a kind of little blind alley which runs off MacDougal Street, only it ain't a alley, because it has boxes filled with trees in it instead of cans filled with garbage. There are about half a dozen little houses, all old-looking and pretty much alike, on each side, and the Professor lives in the next to the last house on the right-hand side. The house has a white door with a brass knocker and a brass bell on it and the Professor rings the bell to let his wife know he is coming, I guess, before he unlocks the door. His wife is a pretty piece who is young enough to be his daughter and it is not hard to see why she might wish to dose the Professor's coffee and brandy if she has a young picture-painter just around the corner. She does not appear to welcome me too heartily, maybe because I am not dressed up like most of her guests, although I am wearing a coat and pants I got practically new from the Salvation Army, I just washed all over three days ago in a public bath and I have recently had a close shave and haircut at the barbers' college.

"The Professor's house is not like any which I am used to going into. It has wallpaper and pictures in gold frames and shiny furniture and long red curtains at the windows. And it is full of animals. There are two dogs and more cats than I can count and there are bright-colored fish in little glass tanks and there is a cage with two of those little green birds in it that sit smooching each other all day. The Professor introduces me to his pets, but I'm afraid I do not remember the names of all the little bright-colored fishes which he has in his glass tanks.

"We go out into the garden, although it is not much of a garden. It is a place which is paved with what they call flagstones and there is a umbrella and a table and some chairs and there are plants and little trees growing out of pots. The Professor tells his wife to make some coffee and we will all have coffee and brandy in the garden. The Professor and I and one of them big woolly dogs which are supposed to carry a shot of brandy hitched to their collars and one of



"I've told Mr. Vanderlip here that you are planning to poison me," he tells her.

them little dogs which look like a wienie sit out in the garden talking of this and that while Mrs. Dean is making coffee. Pretty soon she comes out with a tray. On the tray is three cups of coffee, two regular-sized cups and the big cup for the Professor, and a bottle of brandy which looks like it has been laying around somebody's cellar a long time, and a little silver thing with sugar lumps in it."

Romano asked: "Did she bring out the coffee pot or a cream pitcher?"

The Killer shook his head. "No sir," he said. "She must of poured the coffee into the cups inside the house. And we put brandy instead of cream into the coffee."

"Did all of you take sugar?" Romano asked.

"Yes sir," replied Killer Carney. "Everybody took sugar. The Missus and I took two lumps apiece, but the Professor took three or four because he had such a big cup."

"Who poured the brandy into your coffee?"

"The Professor. He poured a big slug in all our cups. His wife said he was pouring too much."

"And he poured from the same bottle into all your cups?" asked the Lieutenant.

"Sure. There wasn't but one bottle. A real old-looking kind of bottle it was."

"And did each of you drink the coffee with the brandy?"

"Well, Mrs. Dean and I start to drink ours, but the Professor says to his wife: 'My dear,' he says, 'do you really think it's safe for me to drink this?'

"'What in the world do you mean, Stephen?' she asks him.

"Are you quite sure you haven't put something special in this big cup of mine?' he asks her. 'Something that might disagree with me?'

"'Stephen!' she says. 'How absurd can you get?' she asks him.

"'It's quite all right, my dear,' he tells her. 'I've told Mr. Vanderlip here that you are planning to poison me.'

"This makes me feel very embarrassed, so I drink my own coffee and brandy down at a gulp. Mrs. Dean is blazing mad. She says to the Professor, 'You fool!' she says. 'I wondered why you brought this man here! You must be completely insane,' she tells him.

"The Professor reaches over and slides the cup which she has been drinking from across the table and pushes the big cup with the ships painted on it, which he hasn't touched, towards his wife. He sips coffee and brandy out of his wife's cup and he says to her, 'If you're sure there's nothing indigestible in the coffee you prepared for me, why don't you drink it yourself, my dear?'

"'You poor, crazy fool,' his wife says. 'You need a psychiatrist,' she tells him. Then she stares him straight in the face like she is kind of defying him and before anybody can stop her, she picks up the Professor's big cup with both hands, and drinks it down, even though the Professor jumps up out of his chair and starts yelling that she shouldn't.

"She puts down the cup and she stares the Professor in the face again, and then all of a sudden she has a funny look and she starts to choke and then she doubles up and falls out of her chair.

"Right there is where I lam. I run out of the house and I don't stop until I am in Grogan's Elite Palace Café and Bar on the Bowery. I tell Suds, the bartender, the funny thing which has happened to me, and he reminds me that Tommy Twotoes is a kind of a detective even if he ain't got a badge, so after I get the twenty that the Professor has give me changed, I have a few boilermakers and I take a train to Tarrytown and see Tommy Twotoes and today he brings me here and that's all that I know about anything."

"You know too damned much," said Romano. "You know enough to

give Professor Dean a perfect alibi and to knock my case into the left-field bleachers."

The Lieutenant turned to Tommy and sighed. "The case was almost too perfect," he said. "Dean was a professor of chemistry at Empire State university. He had access to all the poison he could use. You see how smart he was? He decided to kill his wife by poison. So he alibis himself in advance by picking up a panhandler to witness the whole thing. This man can swear that Mrs. Dean prepared the coffee and that she poured it into three separate cups, one of them a very distinctive cup, while nobody was looking. He can swear that the brandy they all drank came out of the same bottle and the sugar they all used came out of the same bowl. He'll testify that although Dean goaded his wife into drinking the cup with the poison in it, she actually drank it of her own volition. He can even say Dean made some kind of effort to stop her—too late. I don't know how Dean got cyanide into the cup. He was smart enough to pour a lot of brandy in, too, so the fumes would disguise the bitter almond odor. Dean's guilty as hell. Otherwise, he wouldn't have prepared such an elaborate alibi. But proving it is something else. I doubt the D.A. will even bring the case to trial after hearing Carney's evidence."

"KILLER," asked Tommy Twotoes, "what kind of coat was Professor Dean wearing yesterday?"

"A sports coat with a kind of zigzag check," the Killer replied.

"Is that the coat he is now wearing?" Tommy asked Romano.

"Yeah," replied the lieutenant. "A hound's-tooth tweed."

"Where is Dean now?" asked Tommy.

"Matter of fact, he's right in the building," Romano answered. "We brought him here this morning for what we politely term 'further questioning'."

"Can you arrange to bring him here and allow me to question him in an *ex officio* capacity?" Tommy asked. "By staging a bit of mummery, I may be able to break him. You see, this whole matter hinges on a horse."

"A horse!" exclaimed Romano. "Why not the dogs or cats or pigeons or tropical fish or lovebirds? It's irregular, of course, but I'll have him down. I'm like the Killer—I've got nothing to lose."

Romano spoke into a phone.

In a few minutes a detective arrived with Dean. You could tell the Professor was an immaculate, self-contained little man under ordinary circumstances, although his clothes were rumpled now from a night in jail and long hours of questioning by the police.

When the Professor saw Killer Carney, his face lit up. "Thank God you've come forward at last, Vanderlip!" he cried.

"This gentleman wants to ask you a few questions," Romano said to Dean, indicating Tommy with a nod of his head. "He's kind of a special investigator in this case."

The Professor regarded the grossly corpulent old man curiously.

Tommy Twotoes said: "Professor Dean, please remove your coat."

"My coat?" asked the bewildered Dean.

"Your coat, sir," replied Tommy. "You will hand it to Dr. Rooke, our police laboratory technician. Take his coat, please, Doctor."

I didn't quite know when I'd been awarded a doctor's degree, but I took the coat.

"Now, Professor Dean," continued Tommy, "you were accustomed to taking midday strolls in the vicinity of Washington Square, I believe?"

"Weather permitting, yes," replied the Professor.

"And you were accustomed to carrying with you tidbits for animals and birds you might encounter during your walks?"

"I was," replied Dean. "I have always been fond of animals."

"You often encountered a horse hitched to a vegetable wagon, a horse you addressed as 'Percy,' during these midday strolls?"

"I did," answered Dean, smiling. "I called him Percy because he had such a long, gaunt face, like the caricatures of typical Englishmen. I always found Percy standing hitched to his wagon at the corner of MacDougal and Minetta Lane, while his owner was crying his wares. Percy is a particular friend of mine."

"And you were accustomed to feeding sugar lumps to this horse, Percy?" Tommy asked.

Dean's eyes narrowed. "Yes," he said at length. "Yes, I was. But why on earth do you ask that, sir?"

"You encountered the horse, Percy, yesterday while you were in the company of Mr. Vanderlip here?"

"Yes," said Dean.

"But you did not feed him his usual tidbit of a sugar lump?"

"No. I had forgotten to bring any sugar with me, I'm afraid."

"Isn't that rather odd, Professor?" Tommy asked. "You carried biscuits for dogs and corn for pigeons. There was a bowl of lump sugar available in your house. Yet you forgot to bring a sugar lump for Percy, whom you describe as your particular friend."

"I simply forgot it, is all," said the Professor.

"No, Professor Dean," said Tommy, his tone very stern. "It won't wash. It won't wash at all. You had a sugar lump in your pocket. But it was not for Percy. Mr. Vanderlip here has testified that when you saw the horse, you reached in your pocket, took out a lump of sugar, but that on second thought you returned it to your pocket."

OF course, the Killer hadn't said anything like that. The old fighter's jaw gaped open, but a frown from Romano silenced him.

"You did not give Percy the sugar because it would have killed him," Tommy Twotoes continued. "And you did not intend to kill a horse. You intended to kill your wife. Cyanide of potassium comes in small white sticks which a chemist such as yourself could easily introduce into a sugar lump. A tenth of a gram is sufficient to bring death almost immediately. You could not risk carrying sugar for Percy yesterday because it might get mixed with the lump of sugar you were carrying about awaiting the opportunity to slip it into the coffee you would trick your wife into drinking. It was simple enough for you to drop the poisoned sugar into the big cup, along with the other lumps you took from the bowl."

"This is fantastic," said Professor Dean.

"I am surprised at you, sir," said Tommy Twotoes. "You are a chemist, and you should know that the modern detective depends more upon the laboratory technician than upon the rubber hose."

Tommy turned to me. "Dr. Rooke," he said. "You will take the coat to the laboratory and make the necessary tests. Pay special attention to any microscopic particles found among the lint in the pocket. There is certain to be crystals of sugar—and of cyanide of potassium. We will expect your report as soon as possible. It will wind up our case against Professor Dean."

The Professor smiled. "I had to kill her," he said. "I could not have let her go to the arms of another man. But it doesn't matter much about your tests. I carried the poisoned sugar lump loose in my pocket, so I could reach it quickly when I needed it. Now she's dead, I have no desire to live."

When Killer Carney and I had settled Tommy in the Rolls Royce, the old man said to Ebony Black:

"Ebony, you will stop at a grocery store and procure a package of lump sugar. Then drive to MacDougal Street and Minetta Lane in the Village. We are going to make a present to a horse named Percy, with the compliments of Lieutenant Romano."

The Autobiography

HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME ARE REVEALED THE EXTRAORDINARY CONTRADICTIONS IN JAPANESE CHARACTER AND TRAINING THAT PRODUCED THESE DEVOTED SUICIDE PILOTS. ONLY THE END OF THE WAR SAVED SUZUKI FROM FOLLOWING THE FANATIC FATE OF HIS BROTHER PILOTS. (HE IS NOW A STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN!)

by YUKIHISA SUZUKI

THE responsibility of the Kamikaze had become increasingly important in direct proportion to the extremely serious war situation; and even though the departure of Kamikaze pilots had become an everyday happening, it was always a touching scene. At the beginning, the brave deeds and achievements of the Kamikaze pilots were reported on a grand scale, and stirred up the hot blood of young men; but at that time, details of news about their attacks and their results were not issued at all. Accordingly, we did not know how they performed and what they did, whether they succeeded or were shot down on the way. Though we had an inkling of the fact that there was something wrong, and that there was a gap between the announcements from the Information Section of the Imperial General Headquarters and the real results, we did not realize until later that we had been completely fooled by leaders of the same flesh and blood.

We wanted to know and tried to find out the true state of the war and the real power of the American forces, but everything was veiled by the strictest news blackout and by the censorship of the leaders. "Our brave Kamikaze Special Attack Corps caught the enemy task forces and ships, made a fierce attack and showed the true value of the Japanese youth." That was the customary form of the announcement. We felt sorry for friends who went so cheerfully, believing that their efforts would be of some benefit in recovering the shattered destiny of the country even a little. Though the faces that came into my mind were seemingly cheerful ones, I had a feeling that some of their smiles were vexed and troubled ones.

"I hear that many are shot down by the Grummans on the way," Horibe said, interrupting my reverie.

# of a Kamikaze Pilot – II

"I've heard that too. Also, that our planes are no match for the enemy's."

"No, they aren't. How can we fight on even terms with them with such old and poor planes? Even to get to the targets is almost impossible. It seems to me that some of the men are still alive in some of the islands, having had to make a forced landing on the way because of engine trouble."

"Maybe. Isn't there any new weapon that will upset this critical situation, I wonder?"

"No, I don't know that there's any as far as I've heard. I hope our engineers will invent a terribly powerful weapon so that when we push the button, the enemy's continent will be crushed to pieces."

"Yes. In fact, we had the tendency to neglect the great power of science in the past. It is clear that however high one's spirit, and no matter what noble ideas one might have, if he doesn't recognize the value and greatness of science, everything will be in vain. Isn't that so?" I said.

"Yes, indeed. I don't think we are inferior to American young men in fighting spirit, but we can't shoot down B-29s by throwing stones at them, can we?"

"No, how can we?"

"In fact, when B-29s came over the airfield at Usa, where we were before, and bombed, I realized deeply the inequality of fighting power between our country and the enemy. Even now, when I recall that horrible scene, I can't help feeling a chill creep up on me."

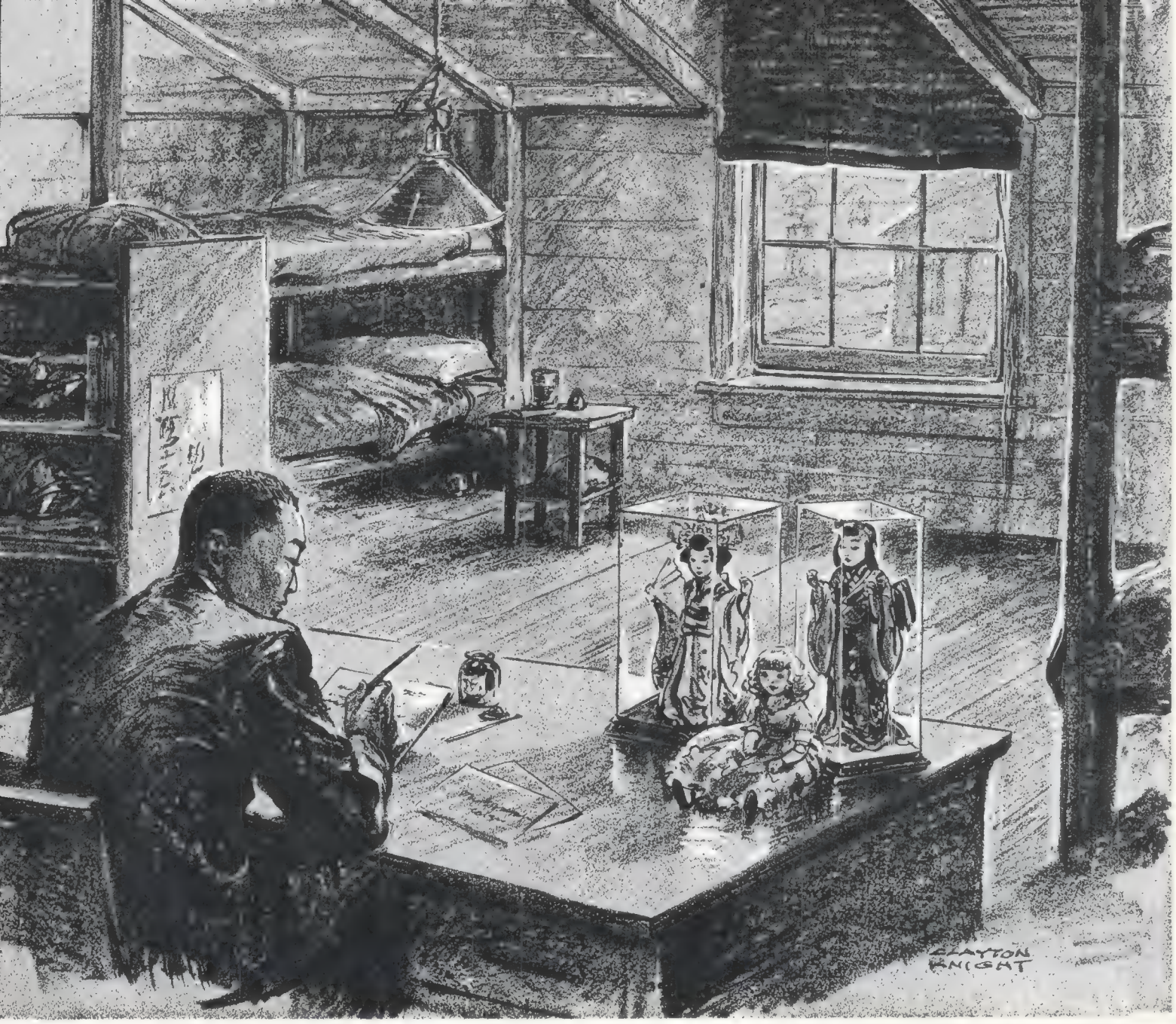
"Was that the day Noguchi was killed?" I asked.

"Yes, it was. And Ueda and several others too."

"THAT reminds me, we all had a picture taken with Noguchi, didn't we?"

"Yes, let me see. Here it is." He turned a few pages, and there was the picture which had been taken at Izumi Air Base. It was taken after Horibe and Noguchi and two other friends and I had lunch together at a restaurant one Sunday when we were off duty. We were all in white naval uniform. How could I believe that Noguchi, whose face was in that picture, had died?

"I can't tell you how bad I felt when I picked up his dead body. He



was chatting merrily with us just about half an hour before, you know, and when I returned to the base after the raid, I found him fallen on the ground in a pool of blood. His body was still a little warm, but he didn't answer my call. He was really a nice fellow, wasn't he?" he said, but I was gazing at the picture and too deep in my own thoughts to answer. I quietly prayed for repose of Noguchi's soul.

Leaving Horibe's room, I went outdoors. In the darkness of the moonless night a few streaks of light were streaming from the chinks in the wooden walls and from the rips in the black curtains provided for the night air-raids. The stars were covering the dark sky all over and were twinkling as if each of them was a dead friend.

I cursed the cruelty of the war while yet thinking that it could not be helped if it was a process of the growth of human beings and of approachment to the peace of the world, which was and is the only and greatest wish of human beings. The cart of the history of the world was running rapidly and ghastly, but we had to walk the road like slaves, or else we had to ride in it and do our best to achieve its great object. If we are driven by this vast and muddy machine called history without doing anything to drive and direct it, there is no value in or reason for our existence, I thought.

I wrote to our old family friend whose son had been killed.

I REALLY enjoyed a sound sleep until the trumpet call of reveille was heard. Then a voice saying "Everybody up! Everybody up!" came through the loud-speaker which was fastened to the ceiling in the passageway. Some of my roommates got up, saying: "It's time to get up, you fellows. It's five-thirty. You'll be late for the morning assembly." Though I was wide awake now and thought I should get up, I lazily kept lying on the bed in the dark room. It was not long before I heard the loud voice of soldiers reciting the five articles of the Emperor Meiji's Imperial Rescript:

"The soldiers and sailors should consider loyalty their essential duty.

"The soldiers and sailors should be strict in observing propriety.

"The soldiers and sailors should esteem valor.

"The soldiers and sailors should highly value faithfulness and righteousness.

"The soldiers and sailors should make simplicity their aim."

It was the daily custom to recite this after we bowed in veneration fac-

ing the direction of the Imperial Palace, and after this there would be instructions on that day's work from the officer of the day, and then the morning calisthenics.

After a while I got up, put on my fatigue suit, went to the window and pushed aside the black curtains and opened the windows. Yasuda, Nagata, and Watanabe were still sleeping. I went out to the washroom, washed my face, and shaved. When I came back to my room, those who went to the morning assembly had already come back, and those of us who were ready went out for breakfast. Though the dining-room for student pilots of the torpedo-carrier corps, dive-bomber corps, and scouting corps was quite large, half of the seats were empty, and it was quiet.

After breakfast, we swept our room ourselves, as we could not always expect the soldier-servant to do it, and put everything in order. Then we went to the medical office for our physical examination. Everybody passed, and I was very glad to know that my chronic bronchitis had been completely cured. Then we went to the supply and got some daily necessities, tooth-brush, letter-paper, cigarettes, pencils, and so on, and from the clothing store we obtained flight suits, flight boots, woolen jacket and scarf for flight training, as it was still cold up in the sky, another fatigue suit and other things necessary for the training. By the time we finished doing these things one after another, it had become lunch time. After lunch some went to the barber's to have a haircut, and some to the washroom to wash their clothes themselves. It was about three when I finished all the preparations for the training on which we were staking our lives and the fate of the country.

I PACKED the canned goods and other rations to take to Tokyo the next day. Then I sat down at the desk and began to write a letter to our old family friend Mrs. Yamaguchi, whose son had been killed.

After having finished it, I read it over slowly and then folded it up and put it into an envelope.

"Say, have you finished that letter to your girl friend?" Kawashima asked from somewhere in back of me.

"Oh, no. To Mrs. Yamaguchi whose eldest son was killed at Okinawa as a member of the Special Attack Corps. I haven't a girl friend nor even much of a memory of love affairs. I never had any time to spare nor any chance to keep company with girls."

"Nor had I. In fact, it seems to me that we never had any time to enjoy our youthful days. There was nothing but a succession of crises and wars. Well, let's take a bath first and then have supper."

"I'm all set. All right, let's go and take a bath," I said. We instinctively used the English word "bath" instead of the Japanese word *"furo,"* although at that time all foreign words except those of German and Italian derivation were prohibited. Stores and tearooms, for instance, were strictly forbidden to use foreign titles and names, especially English and American derivatives. Baseball, although not prohibited, was frowned upon. There was a, "Let's kick out the permanent wave!" movement among the women. The Army had the greatest difficulty in changing deeply rooted habits. We in the Navy had for a long time been using English words, *"nice"* for *pretty, "white"* for a young and attractive girl, *"black"* for a prostitute, and *"engay"* for a fiancée from the English word *"engagement."*

We each carried a towel and a soap dish and went to the bathroom for student officers which stood just behind the headquarters. As Kawashima and I were crossing the road between the first barracks and the headquarters, we saw an upper-class officer, a graduate of the Naval Academy, no doubt, coming from our right, so we instantly saluted him, and he answered with a salute. Just as we turned into the narrow path beside the headquarters, the officer cried out, "Wait!" At first we thought he was calling us, and we turned around, but then we understood that he was not calling to us but to a friend of ours who was behind us.

"Why didn't you salute me, huh? Have you forgotten the etiquette of the Navy?" the officer said in a harsh voice.

"Sorry, I didn't notice, as I was in a hurry."

"You bum, there is no use making excuses." No sooner had he said this than he slapped our friend's face several times. We turned and began again to walk toward the bath, as such scenes happened so frequently every day, and if we worried ourselves about it every time we saw it, we would only make ourselves miserable in the Navy. We heard the upper-class officer say finally, "Take care not to neglect saluting any more."

Fortunately, the bath was not crowded, and the water was just warm enough. We washed each other's backs. The most pleasant thing in the Navy was taking a bath after the training.

When we went outside, the sun had already set, and we decided to go to the rear of our barracks and lie down on the grass, even though it was a little wet and chilly. The evening star twinkled in the dusky sky, and lights were glittering in the farmhouses. I broke the silence of our dismal thoughts and began to hum the song, "When it's lamp-lighting time in the valley," in English. Kawashima listened. "That's really a nice song, isn't it?" he said quietly. "When evening comes, I become rather sentimental and always think of my parents and wonder what they are doing. I'm anxious to go back home," he continued. "I curse the war. To speak frankly, is our country fighting now with firm prospects of victory? I don't want to die. I want to live as long as possible and study. I still have many things left to study. Just think of it, those students in the science course were not mobilized, and they're staying at their studies while we students in the literary course have been mobilized. Why didn't I enter the science course? How I envy them!"

Even though his continual complaining about being a soldier and about the war had sometimes made me irritated, he was still my closest friend in the Navy. I knew that most of the soldiers who had been students, especially the pilots, were in a deep dilemma, thinking of life and death, with death coming nearer day by day.

EVER since the war began, the Information Section had repeated over and over again the statement that not a single enemy plane would ever pierce the complete Japanese defenses and reach the homeland. When I was at Himeji Air Base, there was an air attack by about fifty American Grumman Avengers and Vought-Sikorskys. This was in April, 1944. When the warning came, about twenty of our planes took off in a magnificent formation. We were thrilled at the prospect of a real fight. Instead, our planes didn't attack but only went off to other bases for safety. Our anti-aircraft, of which the upper-class officers were so proud, couldn't hit a single enemy plane. A few bursts came near, but most of them were very wide. After this, other officers told us that the same thing happened at every other base.

While I was in the service, new planes made their appearance, the Shiden (Purple Thunder), the Tenzan (Mountain of Heaven), and the Ryusei (Shooting Star). The Information Section bragged about the power of these planes, and a great deal came out in the newspapers bragging about their excellence. When we saw them in operation, the facts were very much to the contrary. They were more powerful than the ones we had, but they were poorly constructed. The landing gear of the Shiden was always breaking; there were many accidents in mid-air, and while I was undergoing flight training, motor

stoppage was a common event. Once at Himeji the motor of a Shiden stopped in midair, and the plane came down on a railroad track and killed many people.

The Information Section also kept on saying that the spirit of the people back home was very high. I found out on my visit home that that certainly was not true. The people back home that I knew were discouraged, without hope of victory, and they seemed to me to be only blind animals following military leaders. They were without weapons but were taking military training with bamboo spears!

Anyway, here we were, in back of the barracks, discussing the dilemma we were in.

KAWASHIMA continued: "I have patriotism burning brighter than in most people; but true patriotism has to be based on the idea that a man has to be a man first of all. If we try to do something for our society and country, we have to cultivate and improve ourselves as human beings. We have been educated to move obediently to the orders and regulations from above, and especially after the Sino-Japanese affair, the spontaneous activity of individuals was repressed. The principals and teachers in the schools were and still are courting the pleasure of the army officers who were attached to the schools; and the administration of the schools was decided by the army officers. The books were strictly controlled, and the teachers in their lectures truckled to the army officers. If the situation goes on like this, what will be the result of education in this country and the effect on the next generation after us?

"I am a Japanese and a soldier, and I don't mean that I am indifferent to the war or that I saw my friends die with cold and contemptuous mind. I won't volunteer to be a member of the Special Attack Corps, but if I am selected and am obliged to go, I'll do the best in my power. But I don't want to die. As I was born a man, I want to die as a man. It is really unbearable to hear the upper-class officers say, 'Planes are weapons, so you must be careful with them. No matter what the reason might be, you must save them at the risk of your lives.' Are we inferior to materials? I hate to live in such a world where men neglect the value of human life and treat life so cheaply."

"Let's stop here," I said, "because we can't reach definite conclusions at present. Come on, let's go and enjoy sweet dreams and have a real happy Sunday tomorrow."

When Kawashima and I were about to slip into our beds after changing from fatigue suit into night clothes, there came the voice of a soldier-servant outside the door.

"May I come in, sir? This is a soldier-servant. I've brought lunch for tomorrow."

"Let's see what he's brought, Kawashima," I said and went to the living-room. The soldier-servant came in and put a large wooden tray with ten packages of lunch on the table.

"Well, how many can I have?" I asked.

"One for each, sir. You're coming back for supper, aren't you?"

"I don't know whether I am or not. I'd like to have three," I said.

"Are you going to eat three, Suzuki?" Nagata asked.

"No, I just don't want to cause any extra trouble to my mother and want to let her taste the food from the air base."

I slept soundly until three in the morning, when I woke up. Kawashima woke up and got up just at that moment. I got up then and woke up Kanayama, Nagata, and Yasuda, who were also going to Tokyo that day. We took the first train.

While I was looking again at the burned out districts from the train window, I heard someone coming up behind me. He slapped me on the left shoulder. It was Genichi Sawada, one of my pilot classmates who had been transferred to Tsukuba Air Base.

"Hi, Sawada. How are you? I haven't seen you for a long time. Are you still at Tsukuba? I was just transferred to Hyaku-ri-gahara last week."

"Yes, I'm still there. I'm off today because it's Sunday, and I'm going back home."

"So am I. How are all our mutual friends?"

"There have been a lot of changes. They have all gone to Okinawa as members of the Tsukuba Special Attack Corps. I myself am transferred to Konoike to be a member of the Jinrai Special Attack Corps, so this will be my last chance to see you. When you meet someone else whom I know, please give them my best regards."

"You are going to be a member of the Jinrai! There aren't very many planes left any more, so maybe most of the pilots will become Jinrai, I suppose. Well, I finally recovered from my illness and finally caught up with our friends of the torpedo-carrier corps."

"Oh, then, you will have a good time with them. Anyhow, I wish I could go with a plane which had a propeller and an engine, if I have got to go, but that's only my wish, and I know it won't be fulfilled, and I have to pilot a Jinrai plane. I haven't even the faintest knowledge about the Jinrai, but there is no other way except for me to trust myself to luck. I hope we shall meet again soon."

"I hope so. Keep a stiff upper lip. I wish you lots of luck."

"Thanks, and the same to you. Well, I'd like to talk longer, but I have to get off here," he said when the train arrived at Ikebukuro. We shook hands firmly, and I saw him get off.

"He's going too, and to the Jinrai Corps!" I said half aloud. Everybody in the coach was looking at me, and though I began to look out of the window at fire-blackened ruins again, my mind was on the fate of my friends, and on the Jinrai.

As the situation got worse and the supply of planes had become critical, the attention and training of the pilots had been concentrated on the Jinrai, which, although the details were still kept secret from the public, was advertised by the military authorities as one of our new and secret powerful weapons. Accordingly, we did not know much about it, but we had heard that it was a motorless plane and that it worked on the glider principle. It was referred to as the "bomb with wings." It was flown to its destination attached underneath the mother plane. The pilot entered just before it was released. We were not informed of its effect and power, but we knew that at the final signal from the mother plane—*dot dot dot dash dot (o-wa-ri-ma-a-a-ku, this is the end)*—it was released and fell swiftly to the target from a height of about thirty-five hundred meters at a steep angle, and often at a speed of six hundred kilometers an hour. We heard that the pilot usually lost consciousness. As the forward half of the body of the plane was filled with explosives, that was the last of the pilot and the plane once it was released, and there was no hope of surviving or returning, because the pilot had no parachute even if he had a chance to get out.

THE new weapons invented by the military scientists were "murder weapons," and we called them that. Whenever we thought of the Jinrai, although we were not told anything about it and had never seen even a picture of it, what Sawada said, "If I must go, I want to go in a plane with a propeller and an engine," was a wish common among us pilots. I thought that if that was the only method of defense we could take against the American forces, we had already lost the war.

I was not going to my house but to my home, I momentarily thought, because after all, the hut had been built by my mother and father with their own hands from nothing, and to me it was the only place where our hearts could be warmed in this world with love and understanding.

"This canned pineapple—you haven't seen anything like it for a long time, have you?"

Just as I looked around, Mother came out of the dugout on my right, probably at the sound of my footsteps. She had a pan in her right hand.

"Hello, Mother. Surprised to see me again?" I asked.

"Oh, it's you, Yukihisa. How did you get to come again? Is today Sunday?" she asked.

"Yes, I'm off today. I can come every Sunday now. Isn't that lucky?"

"It certainly is. Did you say you could come every Sunday?" she said, her face beaming.

"Yes, if we have no Sunday air-raids, and until the regulations at the air base change," I answered. "By the way, where did the rest go? Aren't they off on Sunday?"

"Father and Michiko have gone to their work. They have to go, even on Sunday, though Father said he had nothing to do. Takeshi and Mieko have gone to Utsunomiya to your aunt's to take refuge for a while and for a change, as there is no place to rest here and enjoy a sound sleep. And they will get filled up and also bring some food back for us."

"So you are the only one at home now, eh? Well, I can stay here until two o'clock, for I have to take the four-thirty train from Ueno."

"All right. Let's make the best of it. Go into the hut and rest. I'll get lunch."

"Oh, no, Mother! Don't trouble yourself. I have brought three lunches with me. It will let you know what we eat at the air base, and don't be surprised to see the presents I brought," I said and unwrapped the package and handed the articles to her. "See, this is canned pineapple, and here's candy made from real milk and sugar. You haven't seen anything like them for a long time, have you? If the others were at home, they could have some too. Too bad, isn't it?"

"Yes, but I can keep them until they come back. If they had known you were coming, they would not have gone no matter what might happen. Now, go into the hut. Oh, yes, Takeshi said he dug up some more of your books from the ground. Maybe they are in the box inside the hut. Just wait a moment. I have to boil water to make tea."

"All right; I'll take these presents into the hut for you," I said and went in. After taking off shoes, short sword, and hat I sat down on the mat. When I sat down, facing the entrance, I noticed a small box at the entrance packed full of burned books. "They are the ones Takeshi has dug up, no doubt," I said to myself and began to take them out one by one very carefully. Half of them were pocket-size books in a series on philosophy, history, and Greek mythology, and the other half were Takeshi's geometry and physics books, "The Nation and Culture," and Japanese translations of "Letters of Dead German Students." "The Nature of the Greeks," and so on. The books were upstairs, and when the house collapsed at the time of the fire, they must have been thrown clear of the burning portions and so were only charred on the outside edges, and fortunately the characters were clear enough to be read. However, when I heard the sound of Mother's footsteps outside the hut, I threw all the books into the box so as not to make her feel bad by reminding her of how keenly I felt the loss of my books.

"It's about a quarter to twelve. I have two more hours, so let's have lunch and talk. As the training starts from tomorrow, I've really nothing to tell you about, though," I said and opened the packages I had brought. "Now help yourself. I have three of them. Although there was supposed to be only one for each of us, I had the soldier-servant put up two extra so that I might treat you." Each lunch contained about two bowlfuls of rice boiled with barley, several small fish cooked, some pork with gravy, boiled vegetables, and some pickles.

"Oh, it's really a feast! Nowadays, we can't get fish and meat, you know. Maybe fishermen can't go far from Tokyo Bay because of the danger from American planes and submarines, and even if they do catch any,

they go to the Army and Navy. I know many war profiteers are having no difficulties getting food and that they all eat very luxuriously," she said and began to eat. "We have been eating soy beans and corn, so I know my stomach will be surprised to meet rice after such a long absence," she said with a smile.

As we were talking, we heard someone outside the hut calling:

"Are you home, Mrs. Suzuki?"

"Yes," Mother answered and stood up. "Here comes Mrs. Yamaguchi now."

"Hello, Yukihisa. It's wonderful to see you."

"Hello, Mrs. Yamaguchi. The proverb, 'Talk of the devil, and he will appear' has been realized. We were just speaking about you. Well, why don't you come in? I have one more hour," I said. She came in and sat on the mattress. . . .

"Has the training begun already?" Mrs. Yamaguchi asked.

"No, it starts tomorrow. No matter how hard it may be, I'm all set to let myself go."

"We all know you will do well," Mrs. Yamaguchi said.

"My feeling is one of desire to go to battle to avenge my friends' death. I heard all about their fate from my old friends when I arrived at Hyakuri-gahara, and I heard more also on the way here today, but I don't want to say anything about it. I will tell you about the flight training after it starts, but I come to Tokyo only to see your happy faces. I do not want to come here to make you sad or myself so either. Well, Mother, please give Mrs. Yamaguchi the letter I handed to you, though it may be unnecessary for her to read any of it, since she has come. It was written for her to understand my thoughts."

"Here you are, Mrs. Yamaguchi," said Mother.

"Thank you. Please write me as many letters as you can. By your letters we feel stimulated, don't we?" she said to Mother.

"We certainly do. You children were under our care until just a short while ago, but now it's your turn to instruct us and cheer us up."

I LISTENED to their conversation without saying anything. Even though Mrs. Yamaguchi's house was quite safe and her state of living was utterly different from Mother's, which was full of inconvenience and misery, I could feel that she was a good friend to whom my mother could talk without reserve.

The afternoon sun began to flow into the hut from the tiny window on the west. Everything was quiet. There was only the sound of my watch making a very gentle ticking. It was already past two, and I had to leave, but I felt very reluctant to get up and go.

"Well, I think I had better go now," I finally said. "I think I can stay longer next time."

"I do hope you won't have any accidents in the training. I'll tell Father and Michiko that you came today. They'll be sorry for not seeing you. I hope you'll be careful and not catch cold while you sleep because you toss around so."

"All right, Mother."

"And don't forget to keep the belly-band tight around your stomach, because you are liable to get your bowels out of order," Mother said with a concerned air. . . .

The belly-band was usually a long one about four or five inches wide, and it had cotton strings on each end to tie it tightly around one's belly. It was called a *"Sen-nin-bari,"* or "Thousand-stitch belt," and most of us in the service wore them because we thought it kept our stomach warm and because we thought of it as a charm. It aided our morale because we thought of it as something to rely on for protection when our lives were so precarious. It was the custom for us going away to war to wear the "Thousand-stitch belt." It was made only by women's hands. On the cotton belt were embroidered encouraging or lucky words. One girl would make only one stitch of the embroidery. If you had been in Japan during the war, you would have seen many girls and women standing on the street corners, in front of the stations, or at the entrances to girls' schools in order to complete the belt as soon as possible, and most of the men who were drafted passed through the entrance gate to the army or navy wearing a *"Sen-nin-bari."* However, if the belts weren't kept clean and became dirty with sweat, dust, and dirt, they became good homes for lice.

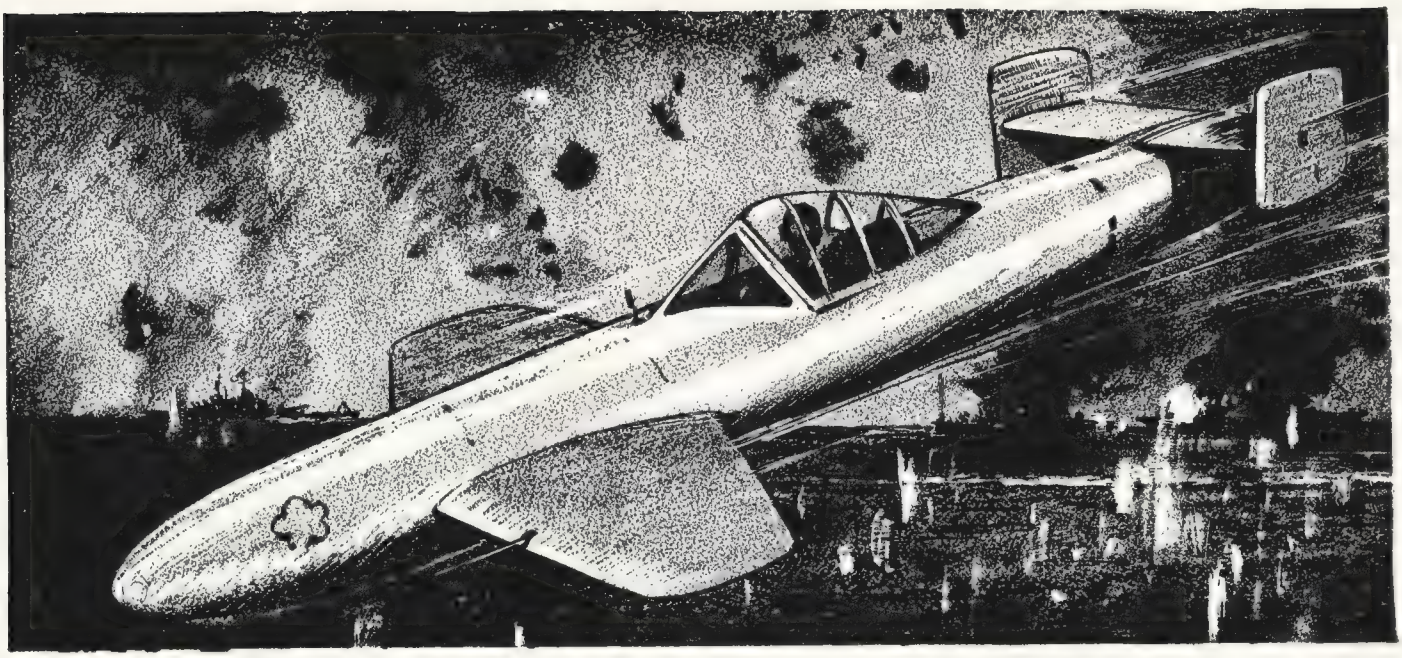
I had two belts. One was given to me by my mother when I came back from Formosa to enter the Navy, and later I learned that she and Michiko and Mieko had made it in one week by standing at Tengenji Station and by Michiko taking it to her factory and Mieko to her school. The other belt was the gift of the mother of a friend of mine in Formosa made while I was lodging at her house and going to school there. It was made by girl students in the Taihoku Girls' High School, and on the reverse side it had the signatures of friends of mine. Ryuta's was there too, and whenever I saw it, I always recalled the picture of Ryuta sitting in my room and writing his name on it with a brush.

"Yes, I am wearing the belt that Ryuta wrote his name on," I said. "Anyway, don't worry about me." I began to make my preparations for departure. I left the hut at about two-thirty and arrived at Ishioka at about seven-thirty after the night had fallen. There I ran into Kawashima. We had supper together at the officers' restaurant, which was for officers only as the ordinary cheap restaurants were off limits to officers, and we enjoyed a good meal in leisurely fashion. After supper we took the last train on the Sangu Line. It was crowded with men returning from their day off duty. We all got off at Ogawa Station. There was only one truck waiting; not very many of us could get on, so Kawashima and I walked. The houses had all been tightly shut up, and the lights turned out. The night walk was really dark and lonesome, but Kawashima and I arrived safely at the base with contented hearts.

FROM the next day the training for death and at the risk of death began.

I was awakened by the sound of the trumpet and the cry of the guard over the loud-speaker, saying: "All hands get up! The first Air Corps—the Dive-Bomber Air Corps—and the Second Air Corps—the Torpedo-Carrier Air Corps—prepare for flight training!" I sprang up out of the bed, though I felt a slight soreness in my feet as a result of the long walk the night before. Getting into a fatigue suit and flight boots, I went to the airfield in a group with my friends, including those from the other bases. I was in the Second Air Corps. We ran through the dew-covered green grass to the airplane shelters at the eastern edge of the field. When we got there, we removed the camouflage nets made of rope and intertwined with leaves and branches, and very carefully examined, with the help of the soldier-mechanics, the thirty planes which were all that were available that day for the flight training of eighty student pilots in the morning and sixty young preparatory trainees in the afternoon, all of whom were about the same age as my younger brother. Then we taxied the planes to a place about two hundred yards away from the commanding hut for the instructors and the tent for us student pilots, and we lined them up there.

Soldier-mechanics began to examine the engines, the parts, and the general condition of the planes while we brought out and arranged parachute belts, telescopes and the blackboard for writing our training turn, and other necessary things from the storehouse behind the hut. Those who belonged in the First Air Corps were making their preparation for the flight training too. The sun was rising slowly in the east and shining brightly on the green grass and hangar. "Splen-



The Jinrai was known as the "bomb with wings."

did day for flight! How pleasant it will be up in the sky today," I said, breathing deeply.

We went back to our room, changed into flight suits, ate breakfast, and returned to the airfield again. Some went to the planes and examined them carefully because frequently the engines stopped during the flight, or gauges did not move, and if we could not get them moving again, the planes would fall and crash. Once we were up in the sky, there was no time for examination or complaint about the poor condition of the plane, so we paid special and precise attention to its condition before the flight. Our planes were called the "97-style ship attack plane," and there was room for three to get in: the front seat was for a pilot, the middle seat for a scout, and the rear seat for a machine gunner; but during the training the front seat was for a trainee, the middle seat was for the instructor, and the rear seat for the one who was going to take the training next. "These are the same type of planes as those used for the attack on Pearl Harbor, so you must recognize their ability and think of the brilliant results of your senior pilots."

This was the same remark I had heard time and time again since I had been selected as the pilot of a torpedo-carrier and began to pilot. However, we knew the planes were too old and poor in their capacity and equipment to be used in actual combat for their original function as a torpedo-carrier, and the only way it could be used now was for a Special Attack plane or as a training plane. "With such a poor plane, perhaps we can't even reach our targets. I wish I could get a chance to pilot a new plane," we all said, but there was no hope of getting that opportunity, and we were resigned to going in that "miserable coffin," the name we commonly used for the Special Attack plane.

I listened to my friends' reporting on the condition of the planes, watched the planes, and listened to the sound of the engines being examined by the soldier mechanics. There seemed nothing wrong with the planes. We all waited for the instructors to come. Subchief of the instructors, Lieutenant Junior Grade Jono, came on a bicycle, got off, and began to write the training order, the pairing of the trainees, and the instructor assignments on the blackboard.

We all watched him, as we were very anxious to know what plane we were going to pilot and from whom we were going to receive instruction. He wrote them down one by one, and whenever he finished writing a name beside an instructor's name, there was a whisper: "Who is that instructor? Is he a professional soldier? Is he strict?" While we were watching, the instructors came out one by one, and only the professional soldiers went into the commanding hut. Officers with temporary commissions hesitated to go in there because the professional soldiers snubbed them and tried to make them uncomfortable. Some of the professional soldier instructors carried rather big and thick sticks in their hands, and some had canes.

"Are they going to beat us with them?" Kawashima said to me.

"I don't know. Maybe they will. They think they can't instruct us unless they have those things. They are hateful things, aren't they?"

I was to be instructed by Ensign Oyama, who was one of the temporary officers and had been one of my instructors at Himeji Air Base. Everyone was envious of me, because he was so gentle and skillful at every phase of the training.

Before long the chief of the instructors, a Lieutenant Commander, came up on a bicycle, and after looking at the blackboard, went into the hut and sat himself down in a comfortable chair. At just about eight the subchief of the instructors cried out: "All hands, line up!" At his voice, we all formed a line in front of the commanding hut, and the student pilot on duty that day reported to the sub-chief of the instructors the numbers who were going to take the training. "The time, the most memorable and historic of all my life, has finally come," I thought.

The senior officer among the instructors reported to the chief: "Everything is ready!" Then the chief climbed up onto a small box in front of us, and we all saluted. He was not a pilot but was a scout officer of the Torpedo-Carrier Corps. He was a professional soldier. He spat his words out at us.

"The training is going to be started from now on. As you haven't been in training for very long, you must pay special attention and be careful not to cause any trouble. Planes are extremely scarce now, and fuel is also very short. I think I can say a plane is worth an enemy carrier and a drop of fuel is worth a drop of blood. At this time of emergency, when everything is lacking and there are many difficulties, I hope you'll realize how tense the situation is, and that you'll

There was only one bus waiting, so we walked.

achieve real results in this training. These planes are going to be used as Special Attack planes, so don't ruin them and don't waste the fuel. Don't let the result of this training be only a waste of fuel and precious time. I won't speak much about the war situation, because I think you know it well. We don't know when you'll be ordered to go with these planes, but take the training as if you are going to the attack. The enemy's power is really mighty, and is getting stronger and stronger, and the only weapon with which to fight against it is the high spirit which I believe you already have. I'll find that out about you later one by one. The subject of today's training is taking off and landing. The direction of the wind is east. Start the training!"

At his words of command, we took our assigned positions. The planes took off one by one, raising the dust and bending the grass and weeds with the wind of the propellers as they left the starting line about in the middle of the field, and on each occasion those who were watching them with the telescopes reported to those who were standing beside the blackboard to make sure that there would occur no mistake in the assigned order, and then the man in charge of the blackboard reported to the chief of the instructors in a loud voice saying, "Number so and so took off," and when the planes landed after several minutes' flight, "Number so and so landed safely."

Those who were waiting their turn were paying close attention to the various phases of the training until their turn to fly arrived. Because of the scarcity of planes and fuel, we were not allowed to do the taking off and landing flight more than three times, although this item of the training was the fundamental one in the course, and at that time it was said that if we could do this taking off and landing flight safely and successfully, or if we could do only the taking off without any difficulties, that was enough to go as a member of the Special Attack Corps, because the Special Attack was a one-way flight anyway, and its mission was only to carry a bomb under the plane and crash into the enemy fleet.

As our turns gradually approached, we became excited and tense and prepared by fastening parachute belts, arranging our flight uniform, and by reading the detailed regulations for the flight. Then we ran from the front of the tent where we were resting to the front of the commanding hut and formally reported our starting to the chief and then stood beside the instructor from whom we were to take the training. When Kato from Usa Base stood beside the instructor and made the report, we noticed the instructor was carrying in his hand a long and thick stick.

"Student officer Kato is going to take the training in plane number—" reported Kato, standing at attention, but the number of the plane he was going to pilot unfortunately seemed to escape his memory for an instant, and he added after a pause, "plane number 319. The item of the training is taking off and landing." Then he saluted. He had not forgotten the number, but was so excited he just slipped.

Poor Kato got more and more excited at the instructor's gruff voice bawling him out. The chief of the instructors then picked up where the other left off. "Besides, just take a look at your dress, you stupid fool. How bold you are to stand with such a sloppy uniform. Look, a button is off your flight suit! Do you think you can pilot an airplane, or do you think you can be a good pilot with such a careless attitude? Go back and try it over again!" The plane had already landed, the occupants had got out, and it was waiting for him.

"Try it over again, Kato," said the student officer of the day. Kato ran back to the blackboard, and after examining his dress carefully and taking a deep breath, made the report again. This time he passed, and we felt rather relieved. He turned and ran toward the plane as fast as he could, and the instructor ran behind him as if he were running after Kato. If he ran slowly or was outrun by the instructor, he would have to submit to punishment for being so dull. The man who had just finished the training with the plane in which Kato was going to ride gave all the information about the condition of the plane as he stood on its left wing. Then he climbed down and came to the front of the commanding hut, also running as fast as he could with the instructor and saluted the chief.

"Student officer Kato has just finished the taking off and landing training with plane number 319. Nothing wrong with the plane," he reported and saluted again.

When he came into the tent, someone asked him about the training and the instructor's behavior in a low tone of voice.

"How was the training? How is the instructor? Is he strict?"

"Well, the instructor, Tokita, looks very gentle but he is in fact extremely strict and exacting in trifles. I know he is quite young and is not very skillful himself. He made me nervous by barking at me all the time, so I could not pilot calmly at all. I did poorly. That's all," Kato answered, flushed with excitement.

On the faces of those who heard this there came a perplexed air. Whenever our leaders took the opportunity of talking with us, they said: "Most of our skillful and brave senior pilots have been lost in the battles off Midway and in the Coral Sea and off Saipan. We have already lost Saipan, Iwo Jima, and other strategically important districts. Now no one but you can save this country from destruction. Though there's not enough time, planes or fuel to give you sufficient training, we hope you'll achieve brilliant results and fulfill the peo-

ple's great expectation toward you by dint of your burning spirit and strenuous efforts."

My friends went out for the training and came back, and it went on and on.

SUDDENLY we heard a harsh voice behind us, and I turned back and saw a few of our group being scolded by an instructor for what they had done during the flight training. I turned my back on the scene but listened carefully. "What in hell have you learned about piloting until now, you guys, huh? Do you think you've done well today? All of you are absolutely no good. Are you really willing to pilot a plane or are you only being driven as to a task? Which is it? What do you think of the critical war situation, huh? To let you take the training is nothing but waste of valuable fuel." My friends and I were listening without a word. We knew what would happen next. "To instruct you by words won't do any good. Take off your flight hats." Then we heard the hateful sounds of the instructor beating them with his fists, and they were getting it in the face.

"How can we do well when they treat us like that?" a friend from Usa Base whispered to me.

"Really, those from the Naval Academy are terrible. I finished my training all right, but the instructor was a professional soldier who screamed and abused me throughout the whole flight. Well, it's useless to talk. Let's forget about it. Have you got a match?" Takasaki asked me.

"No, but I have a lens. I want a smoke too, so let's use it," I said. As matches were very scarce, and as the match-box in the trousers pocket of the flight suit was always apt to be crushed during the training, we used a lens often to light our cigarettes. Some of my friends were smoking comfortably, but I had no time to enjoy it at leisure, for I had to go and get ready, as my turn was coming up.

"Oh, you'd better get ready now, Suzuki," said Takasaki. "Let me see. Oh, your instructor today is Ensign Oyama. You're lucky."

After putting on a life jacket and a parachute belt and examining my dress carefully I went up to Ensign Oyama with three other friends, Shimizu, Hirata and Watanabe, who were in the same group with me. Oyama was sitting on a bench behind the command hut, and when we came up to him, he stood up with a smile. He was about thirty-five or -six and was one of the most skillful pilots in the torpedo air corps.

"Ensign Oyama, we've come to get your instructions before the training," I said as we saluted.

"Oh, you're in my group, eh? Well, as I have taught you before and have corrected your faults already, I've nothing particular to say now. I hope you four will do your best, following the advice I gave you at Himeji and showing me how much progress you've made," he said in a quiet tone of voice.

"Yes, we will," we said in the same tone of voice. I compared his attitude in instructing us with that of the professional soldiers, and we thought we must do our best to repay his kindness. Then I went to the man who had piloted plane number 342, which I was going to fly, and asked about its condition. He said it was a comparatively new one and that its condition was pretty good. "Everything is swell," I thought and shivered with pleasure and with vigor. I examined my flight dress and thought over once more what I was going to say in reporting, and when the man at the blackboard said, "Number 342 has landed, student officer Tanaka piloting," I ran at full speed to the front of the command hut and after saluting the chief made the report in my loudest tone of voice:

"Student officer Suzuki is going to take the training in plane number 342. The item of training is the taking off and landing," I said and saluted again. The chief threw a searching glance at me from head to foot and finally saluted. I felt relieved and turned around and ran at my best speed toward the plane which was coming up to the parking line. When I reached the plane and looked back, I found Ensign Oyama was walking slowly. I jumped up on the left wing, and while the man who had just finished the flight was removing the speaking tube and the parachute belt from the parachute on the seat, I examined the quantity of fuel. When he got out of the plane, I got into my seat, put the speaking tube to my left ear, fastened the parachute belt to the parachute on my seat, and examined the gauges. Ensign Oyama came up, and after looking over the plane from front to back got into the middle seat, and Shimizu climbed into the back seat. When Oyama connected his end of the speaking tube with mine, I asked: "Can you hear me?"

"YES. You've got to examine not only fuel, gauges, and engines but also the body of the plane. Do you understand?" he asked.

"Yes. I'm going to test the engine now," I said to him, and looking around carefully to make sure that nothing was in the path of the propeller's wind, I advanced the throttle and watched the movement of the gauges. "Everything is swell," I thought and reported the result to Oyama.

"All right, start," he said. I raised my right hand and waved it to the right and to the left. That was the signal to take off the chocks in front of the wheels. Soldier mechanics removed them. I was still afraid of making some mistake and having unexpected trouble because I had been out of training for two months, but there was no time now to hesitate or to worry about my skill.

"Do it slowly. Do everything calmly. Always look around and be careful," came Oyama's reassuring voice through the speaking tube.

"The taking-off mark is the tall pine tree. I'll start," I said.

"All right. Don't lose it. Your taxying is very rough; do it more carefully," he said.

I ADVANCED the throttle slowly with my left hand, and the plane began to increase its speed. The needle of the air speed indicator was going up gradually—45—50—60. . . . I looked at the indicator and the mark by turns, moved the control stick in my right hand slightly, and moved the rudder pedals slowly so that I might not get off the mark. I forgot everything else and concentrated my attention on taking off safely and accurately. When the needle reached 65 knots, I realized the speed was enough to take off, so I drew back the control stick slowly. The plane left the ground without a jolt and went up into the clear blue sky; several white cumulus clouds were hanging far away in front of me as if beckoning me. The engine was in an extraordinarily good condition, and its sound was like a soft purring music. I felt refreshed and full of pleasure.

From the sky the scenery of that part of the Kanto district was really beautiful. "Wonderful!" I exclaimed to myself and wished I could show this beautiful scenery to my father, whose hobby was making tray-landscapes. However, when the plane reached an altitude of about 150 meters, I turned to the right and headed towards Lake Kasumigaura, and when the altimeter showed 200, I leveled off. I paid constant attention to the gauges, watched the other planes and the airfield to see if there was any signal to inform us to land in a hurry as in case of air-raids, made the second and third turnings, and then dropping to 150 on the altimeter and decreasing the speed to 65, I turned the fourth turning and tried to land.

"Do it calmly. Look carefully to see if there is any plane in your landing direction," Oyama said.

I stretched myself up and looked, but there was nothing that would disturb my landing. The speed was de-

creasing and the height was dropping, and when the plane was about five meters off the ground, I cried out, "Five meters," closed the throttle, pulled the control stick back slowly with my right hand, and with the rustling sound of the grass and weeds against the wheels of the landing gear, the plane landed without a shock and ran straight ahead for a successful landing. This was quite an achievement, for the uneven airfield was a frequent cause of such accidents as turning upside down or breaking the wheels or running in the wrong direction and crashing into other planes.

"Don't lose your skill now. Do it again," said Oyama.

After looking around carefully and paying due attention to the planes which were taking off and landing incessantly, I tried again with increased spirit and redoubled effort stimulated by the successful result of the first flight. This time, however, I failed in keeping the same height and regular speed during the level flight and became quite confused when the engine once made a sudden detonation. On landing, some planes got in my way, and I was slow in drawing the control stick back, so the plane bounced heavily several times.

"Are you going to crash?" came Oyama's voice through the tube.

"I know why it made such jumps. I'll try it again," I said and took off again at once. That time, though I failed to keep the direction straight when I took off because of too much looking about for other planes and being disturbed by them, I landed without being reprimanded.

"There isn't any more time, so get back." At Oyama's voice, I turned at the southeastern end of the airfield, looked around carefully so that I might not collide with other planes, and then taxied to the parking line.

"I finished my training and will turn the plane over to Shimizu; thanks for your kind instruction," I said after getting out from the right side. After giving advice to Shimizu about the condition of the plane and remaining until I was sure that the plane started safely, I ran as fast as I could to the front of the commanding hut alone.

"Student officer Suzuki has just finished the training with plane number 342. Nothing is wrong with the condition of the plane. There is enough gasoline," I reported to the chief of the instructors and saluted. He looked at me with suspicious eyes but said nothing and saluted back. I turned aside and ran to the front of the tent and there took off the parachute belt.

"Suzuki, your flying time today is twenty minutes," the man beside the blackboard said to me.

"Only twenty minutes?" I asked. Though it was really only a short while and the training passed like a dream, to me it seemed as long as an hour, and I was still filled with the excitement of what I had done.

"How was the training?" Kawashima asked from behind me.

"I didn't make any serious mistakes. I was able to get along fairly well. Oyama wasn't sarcastic at all," I answered. "Have you finished?"

"Yes, Lieutenant Jono was my instructor. Even though he is a professional soldier, he is very quiet and gentle. . . . When that plane lands, it's the end of the training. I'm hungry," he said, pointing to the plane flying in the western sky. When it landed, the man standing beside the blackboard cried out: "All planes landed," and the sub-chief of the instructors Jono reported so to the chief. After a while, the sub-chief shouted: "All line up." Immediately we lined up in four lines in front of the hut as in the morning. The student-officer of the day counted the number and said to the senior officer, "All lined up!" The officer then reported to the chief, and after the latter climbed up on a small box in front of us, we saluted and listened to his remarks.

"Stand at ease! Well, about the result of the training each of you will hear from your own instructor. Generally speaking, though it might be granted that this is the first day of the training and you haven't been in training for a long time, you are still spiritless, and there are many careless fellows among you, as all of you yourself saw and realize."

At his remark there welled up an ill feeling in my mind. "So you are going to punish us, eh? Even though we did our best? Well, do as you please." I looked at the senior officer's disagreeable expression. He continued, "I know you've been told repeatedly that pilots must be very careful and vigorous, but I'd like to say the same thing over again as a warning to you. If there are any who seem spiritless and lack attention, I'll exempt them from this training, as there isn't enough gas and time to let them take the training. The Ryukyus are waiting for you. The training term will be extremely shortened. You must get ready to go whenever you're ordered. I hope you'll do more speedily and successfully from tomorrow on."

He ended, and we saluted. When he left the place to go to his billet on a bicycle, we all knew that was not the end. The senior assistant cried out, "Wait!" and he came up to the middle of the front line. He was the instructor who carried a long and thick stick. All except him and three of the professional soldiers left.

After glaring fiercely at us he began to bark: "What have you learned up until now? For what purpose have you piloted the planes up until now, huh? There are some of you who didn't even know how to examine the engine. Some leveled off for landing while the plane was still fifteen meters off the ground. Really, to get in a plane with you is just to get in with insane people. Moreover, as the chief said, you're really spiritless and don't even take a positive attitude. Some tried to land in the same place where other planes already were. Some took off obliquely. If the training goes on like this, miserable and distressing accidents will surely happen. The country and the people are expecting great things of you, but if you don't correct your rotten hearts you'll surely disappoint them. I won't say any more. You won't understand while I teach with my mouth. I'll correct you with these fists, and you guys, just taste these as a warning for the future. Spread out and take off your hats."

We put a pace between us without a word, took off our hats, and extending our legs so that we might be able to withstand any hard blow, stood and waited. The senior officer said to the three other instructors, "Start beating them," and they separated one to each line and started beating us. As I was standing near the end of the third line, there was some time until my turn came. They were beating my friends in the face as hard as they could, swinging both fists alternately, and to hear the sound that was made was really unpleasant and made me boil inside, but what could we do? "What if I beat him back? No, I can't. If I do, I'll be half killed, only being beaten more severely, and cause a lot of trouble to the others, and I'll be tried by court-martial and reduced to the level of a sailor and will have it much harder."

Suddenly a man standing in the second line staggered from being struck so hard. At that the instructor shouted, "How weak and spiritless you are to stagger at such a blow!" and he beat him harder several times.

That was the principal method of discipline in the Navy and the Army too. I had heard the instructors frequently say to one another, "If the trainees don't do what you tell them to, beat them. Beat them until they learn to obey." Any free expression of opinion was suppressed by their harsh voices and by the beatings we received, and we got this punishment almost every time after the training.

When we young men received the official notice of draft or mobilization, we were in a certain sense stimulated by the thought that we were favored

with the chance of sharing our country's fate. Many younger students who were still in high school volunteered for the Naval and Army air forces and for other services. However, what was really waiting for us and for them? Nothing but beating and ill-treatment called "correction" and "retempering." Our sincere desire to do our best and to dedicate ourselves was disturbed by the upperclass officers' disgusting attitude.

Some men in the Army told me to my surprise that the Navy was better than the Army, for in the latter the soldiers were beaten with the butt of a gun, with shoes, chairs, books, wash-basins, or anything and everything at hand. The instructors gave as the reason for beating us, "It is really painful for us, too, but we use this method to make you reflect on your conduct and mistakes and to improve you."

Illustrated by CLAYTON KNIGHT

The houses had all been tightly shut up, the lights out.

How could we believe it and take it without anger? Up until then I had been beaten about two hundred times all together, once when I failed to salute an officer of higher rank, once when a button was off, and once when I spoke in too low a voice, but the other times I was beaten in group punishment when some of my company made mistakes. In the Navy we would be hit with closed fists for minor offenses, but for greater offenses such as making serious mistakes in the training or in the services, or for leaving camp without permission, or when a group was defeated in some game, the soldiers were forced to stand with legs extended and with arms stretched out to prevent their injury, and then men were beaten around the hips with a stick.

Once I saw several young men who were about the same age as my younger brother Takeshi being beaten with big sticks on which the words, "Stick to inject the military spirit," were carved. The sticks were wielded by their instructors, and finally one stick broke because it was used so hard, and some of the young soldiers lost consciousness. Then one of the instructors brought a bucketful of water and poured it on them to revive them, and then they beat them with their fists.

At the time, I was in a rank higher than the instructors', but I could not even stop them from doing this, as it was strictly forbidden to interfere while anyone was giving any punishment. At Himeji a young man was killed from being beaten so hard in the face, and when the parents came to the base to get his body, they were not permitted to see it. They were simply told that his death "was the result of honorable duty."

Beating was an ordinary thing in the Navy, and those who administered it said that it was the best way to make the soldiers high-spirited and mentally strong and to make them obey orders and that it was also the best remedy for the spirit of carelessness, but the effect was quite to the contrary, and it drove the soldiers into disspiritedness, and some became extremely violent. The patriotism and eagerness to fulfill their duty, both at first burning in the young men's minds, changed into desperation and brutality. In this violent and tragic atmosphere and in deep dilemma, I tried to hold to my ideas of pure and simple love of my country and my people.

The instructor who had been beating the men in my line had just finished with the man next to me. He came and stood in front of me. At that instant there came to my eyes my parents' sad faces. If I told them all about how life really was at the air base, they would be sad and would get extremely angry, I thought. "It's a great insult and disgrace to me and even to you, father and mother, but don't worry. I'll accept it with a smile," I said in my mind.

The instructor stood just in front of me and shook his fist in my face. I stared at his face without a wink and thought what a poor specimen he was. He seemed just like an unmanageable child.

"Learn this lesson!" he said and struck my face twice quite hard, but I accepted both blows and did not move even a little. Both my cheeks became rather hot, but I picked my hat and put it on and waited until he finished with the rest in my line while I looked up at the sky which was as clear as it could be. It seemed to smile to console me. After a few minutes the senior officer cried out, "Form as you were before," and then we assembled in the former place as before. He stood again in front of us in the middle and said simply, "Be careful not to make any more mistakes. Break up!"

At his command, we came to our senses, and after gathering together in a group began to run to our barracks. After washing my face and rinsing out my mouth in the washroom of the barracks, I went into my room and lay down on my bed in my flight suit and relaxed, feeling too tired to move or do anything.

"Well, the morning's training ended without any accidents," said Kawashima as he lay down on his bed beside me.

"I wish all the planes would be hit and burned up by the enemy's attack so that we wouldn't have to take the training any more and have to look at the instructors' unpleasant faces. Even though piloting an airplane is very interesting and gives me pleasure, I can't stand being beaten like that every day. In what line did you stand, Suzuki?" Kawashima asked.

"In the third line. Where were you?" I asked him.

"In the second line. Fortunately I wasn't beaten very hard. I know those

who stood in the first line had a terrible time because the senior officer always takes that line. . . . Well, let's have lunch. I hope the food's good today," he said.

Kawashima sat just in front of me, but we could not eat in peace because of the noise. After we finished and were leaving the room after bowing slightly, we saw a notice on the blackboard at the right side of the entrance. "Afternoon lesson for the Second Air Corps: Lecture on air operational tactics at two P.M."

"Say, we're going to have a lecture this afternoon," I said to him.

"What's the subject? Oh, operational tactics. Well, it's a good opportunity to write letters and to take a nap, isn't it?" he said and grinned at me.

I SMILED slightly in response and said: "He's going to talk just to kill time. Anyhow, it's interesting to know what the instructor has to say who talks big and treats us badly."

"Well, let's go and wash our undershirts, shall we? It's clear and warm, so I think they'll dry soon," he said. "When winter comes, we'll put off washing and there will be those 'lice affairs' again."

Our washing finished and hung out to dry, we went back to our room, picked up notebooks and pens, and went to the dining-room where the lecture was to be held. It was just about two, and some were already sitting at the tables, chatting noisily. The blackboard was standing in the middle of the room, and most of the men were sitting in the far corners of the room so that they might be able to enjoy a nap and write letters. However, when the student officer of the day cried out at the entrance of the room. "All hands stand up!" they all hid under their notebooks the things which they had been writing or reading.

We all stood up at attention facing the blackboard and awaited the instructor's entrance. He came in accompanied by the student officer of the day and stood in front of the blackboard. "Bow down!" the student officer of the day cried again, and we bowed to him. He was the one who left the airfield when the "correction" started, and though he was one of the professional soldiers, he seemed in very feeble health, although I thought he seemed younger than I or at least the same age as I was. He seemed very diligent, too.

"Sit down," he began after bowing back at us and looking us over. Then he put down on the table in front of him books with red covers which showed that they were the top secret books of the Navy. We sat down and waited in silence.

"Although it says on the blackboard 'Air Operational Tactics,' I myself am not well informed on this subject, and as I was asked to give you this lecture by the senior officer on such short notice, I had no time to prepare for it and have nothing particular to tell you. Therefore, I'm afraid that I'll skip from one subject to another. If you're sleepy, you may sleep, and if you want to listen to my lecture, just listen and relax," he said. At this remark there was a general stir among us, and some began to read their novels again and some to write letters and diaries, looking up at him often and pretending to listen.

"Needless to say, the state of the war seems to have reached the step of final decision, as you know from the newspapers or from being told by others," he resumed. We were not allowed to have a radio set and did not see the newspapers regularly every day, because so few copies were given to us, and even when we did have them they were most of the time very old ones, and when we did have time to read them, they only made us more sad at the news of bombings at home and of the desperate attacks on Okinawa.

"At this time of emergency, the way we pilots must and should do is simple, that is, to attack the American fleet as members of the Special Attack Corps; and the tactic, or rather, the method of doing it is only to crash into the targets which are the enemy warships. However, the first problem is how to get to them safely amid the severe fire from the enemy anti-aircraft guns and the strict guard of the enemy planes above them. The second one is the choice of targets. I'm going to talk about the second problem.

"SINCE the time the Special Attack Corps was organized and made its attacks on the enemy fleets, its aim was mostly directed at the aircraft carriers and the battleships, but judging from the results of the attacks and the operational tactics of the enemy landing forces, we have come to the conclusion that we must pay attention to the supporting ships. That is to say, though to crash into the enemy transport ships, munition ships, tankers and other vessels needed to supply necessary weapons and goods after their landing may not seem so brilliant as to sink battleships and aircraft carriers, it is a great mistake to neglect them. When the time comes, all the available planes will be used for the final attack to check the landing of the enemy forces and to protect our homeland, and all of you are favored with the lucky opportunity of having a part in it. At the very moment you are ordered, you must leave this homeland like an arrow let fly from the bowstring, and you must let fly all your saved-up spirits."

Although this was in no way different from the remarks the instructors usually made, I became tense. I looked out the window and imagined the scene when I crashed into the American ships, with my body, feet, arms, head and all the rest of me flying about in pieces and dyeing the deck of the ship red with my blood. The leaders had said the same thing frequently before about crashing into the enemy whenever the Special Attack Corps became the subject, but undoubtedly the thought that that base was the last place for our training for the attack made me feel it more seriously, and I quietly began to think about our fate and no longer listened to what he said.

"CAN we really check the landing operations of the American and English forces with our attack? If we can, I wouldn't hesitate, no, would be willing to go; but if we attack and die in vain, is our homeland going to be devastated and become a barren field? No, I can't think of it. We know that they have a lot of well-equipped and excellent planes, and we have only poor and old ones, and new planes are not coming. Even if the aircraft factories are making new planes speedily, how many of them will be ready in time to fight against the invasion? Though it may be possible to check the invasion temporarily once with all of our planes, what if they come over and over again, what in the world will stop them?"

I was thinking these thoughts and wanted to ask him about them, but if I did, I knew what he would say. He would only get angry and scold me for being so low-spirited and for being in doubt about the fate of the country. The scene of my parents, brother, sisters, relatives, and friends running with bamboo spears, knives, shovels, sticks, and sickles in their hands shouting war-cries and attacking the American forces that had landed came to my eyes. "We must not let them do that! We are in the Navy, in the Air Corps, not to let them do it. There are many pilots, but planes are scarce. No matter how high our spirit might be, we can't defeat the enemy's machine-guns with knives. We overestimated the power of spirit. We can't overlook the enormous power of material. What effect will our attacks have on the outcome of the war?"

My heart was full of worry and horror. Gradually I got tired of his simple lecture, picked up my pen, and began to write in my notebook.

The concluding installment by the Kamikaze-trained pilot Yukihisa Suzuki will appear in your February Blue Book.

My Uncle Everett — and the Ladies' Guild

WHEN A MYSTERIOUS MIDGET MINGLED BRIEFLY WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE GUILD, EXCITEMENT RAN HIGH—AND MRS. CHRISTOPHER WAS LAID LOW.

by HAYWOOD VINCENT

WHEN it all started this time, we hadn't actually seen Uncle Everett in more than a year.

Oh, we had heard from him last Christmas. That morning, just as we were opening the presents, with the kids all around the tree and raising Cain, the expressman arrived at the front door with a big crate that had holes punched in the top.

The expressman was a curious soul, and he stayed to help me. We pried off a side with a crowbar—and out tumbled an honest-to-goodness alligator about four feet long.

Helen's mother had taken the card off the box (she has a way of opening all sealed mail) and was reading it aloud. She had got as far as, *"Yuletide greetings from darkest Africa"* when the alligator flopped out right at her feet.

Mother let out a yell, and I guess that scared the alligator, because he whipped his tail around and smacked her across the back of the legs, propelling her into the eggnog bowl on the coffee table.

Well, with eggnog going all over the room, Helen's mother screaming and the kids shouting with glee, our living-room was quite a spot. Helen looked as though the end of the world had come. In the confusion, the alligator took out through the dining-room and headed for the kitchen, where he encountered our colored maid. Bessie bolted through the back door. That's been more than eight months ago, and we haven't been able to locate her yet.

The good part was that once the alligator hit the linoleum on the kitchen floor, he lost his traction and was more or less helpless. There the expressman, who had been raised in Miami, mounted the 'gator, and between us we managed to get him subdued and back in the crate. I gave the expressman ten bucks to drop the alligator off at the Municipal Zoo; we said "Merry Christmas!" to each other; he winked at me; and that was all of that.

Later on in the day, Helen's mother decided her sacroiliac had been snafued, and she took to her bed for a week. That, I thought, was rather overplaying it—though I've got to admit that being assaulted by an alligator on Christmas morning is an unnerving experience.

It was no help when that evening my boss, Henry Stallings, and his wife came by for a cup of eggnog. I told Henry what happened, and he got to laughing so hard that he nearly quit breathing (he's a pretty heavy-set number) and that didn't go over very well with Helen, who almost had Mrs. Stallings properly impressed with the horror of the event. For some reason the two of them decided the whole thing a vicious masculine plot against mothers-in-law (or is it mother-in-laws?) and before the evening was over Christmas was pretty well shot.

Anyhow, it was all pretty well forgotten by Easter. Little Jimmy occasionally tempted fate by saying things like: "Daddy, when are we going to see Uncle Everett, and will he bring some animals with him?" But I managed to get him hushed up pretty quick.

One morning just before breakfast, I somehow beat Mother to the door on the postman's ring, and got the special-delivery letter. All it said was: *"Arriving June 21st. Have meat. Everett."*

Illustrated by STUART HAY

Christmas morning we pried off a side—and out tumbled an honest-to-goodness alligator.

I had always been Everett's favorite nephew, because when my mother had told all of us kids about Uncle Everett's being the "black sheep" of the family, I had missed the point and thought it was something good. He was always going all over the world and bringing back wonderful presents. And he would take me to the movies and the zoo, and every so often to a burlesque show.

I have never known Uncle Everett's real age. My dad is nearly seventy, and Everett is his younger brother—but even today Uncle Everett looks exactly as he did the first time I ever saw him: sturdily built, muscular, with a ruddy complexion which I originally thought was a result of the vigorous outdoor life he lived. Anyhow, as I say, I always liked the guy, and so when the letter came I just kept quiet.

If you remember, June 21st came on a Monday that summer (I don't guess I'll ever forget it), and it was just about three degrees hotter than the equator at high noon. I was down at the office trying to work and keep cool at the same time. Frankly, I wasn't even thinking about what day it was. My phone rang, and it was Helen. She had that tone she always gets when she thinks Gabriel is about to give that trumpet a go. She said: "George! You've got to do something!"

"I got to do something about what?" I said, not registering.

"Everett is in town!" She was almost screaming—in a refined way, of course. Helen and her mother are very refined types, you understand.

So I came to on that one and tried to make light, happy talk. I gave forth with a lot of palaver about that being real nice, and the kids'll love to see him, good old Uncle Everett! You know. It was like talking back to a news commentator on a TV set. I mean, I got nowhere.

"George, he's just called from the airport, and he's on his way here now!"

"Well, that's fine, honey. We'll put him up for the night. Probably just passing through."

"George, listen to me: He said he had two midgets with him!"

Well, that one kind of got me. "What do you suppose he's doing with two midgets?"

"George, I don't care what he's doing with two midgets. Mother and I are having a seated tea for the Ladies' Guild. You've got to leave right now, and stop him before he gets here!"

Now, I couldn't argue with that. Even I could see that having Uncle Everett roar into a Ladies' Guild seated tea, with two midgets, would be strictly for the birds. That Ladies' Guild is a pretty stuffy covey of quail. So I gave Helen a reassuring word, ran to my car and drove like a wild man for our house. I figured that as far away as the airport was, I could beat Everett home and take him and the midgets off somewhere until the festivities were over at the house. Then too, I thought it might be a good idea for me to get checked out on those midgets right in the beginning.

When I pulled up in front of our house, there were cars from the party parked all over the block—but not a taxi in sight. I drove on down the driveway to put the car in the garage. That's where I made my mistake. I underestimated Uncle Everett and those midgets.

As best I can reconstruct the events now, their taxi must have pulled up right behind me. Anyway, by the time I was out of the garage, I heard the shout go up; and when I got to the kitchen, Dr. Thornquist (he's the pastor) and some rather stout woman were carrying Mrs. J. Scott Christopher through the door from the dining-room. Dr. Thornquist was shouting for water.

When you listen to Dr. Thornquist in the pulpit on a Sunday morning, you'd never believe he could get so worked up. But I'll tell you for sure at that moment he was right agitated. (Of course, for one thing, carrying Mrs. J. Scott Christopher is no parlor trick. She won't miss 210 pounds by much.) I ran over to help him, and he muttered something about, "Thank God you're here," and by this time the kitchen was crawling with women, all of them screeching at the top of their lungs. There was some efficient-looking woman in low heels saying: "Put her head down, right on the floor. Put her head down!"

Well, by this time we were ready to put her down somewhere, so the floor seemed okay. She was out cold, all right, and as soon as we got her on the linoleum, two ladies (Low Heels and another one about the same type) took over and started working on her. Dr. Thornquist was still shouting: "Water, water!" I figured he wanted it for the fallen Mrs. Christopher, but it seems the events of the day had given him an awful thirst, so I got him a glassful, and he downed it at a gulp. I wanted to find Helen, but Dr. Thornquist grabbed me by the arm and pulled me into the pantry out of the confusion.

"Mr. Swanson," he gasped, leaning back against the sideboard, "I want you to know that in your absence I did everything in my power to handle this situation, but it was frankly beyond my range of experience."

Well, I thanked him, and I tried to get away to find Helen; but Thornquist had fastened a clawlike hand on my coat, and he really seemed to need help about as badly as anybody.

"Mr. Swanson, we were having a perfectly lovely meeting. It was just beginning. I had given the invocation, and Mrs. J. Scott Christopher, our recording secretary, and as you know one of our great community leaders, had risen to read the minutes of the last meeting. As a matter of fact, she had just got to the part where the ladies had given me a vote of confidence for the continuing excellence of my sermons, in spite of the fact that during the year my dear wife had undergone seven separate and intimate operations. Of course that intimate part wasn't in the minutes, but I knew the ladies all appreciated my problem, and I was deeply touched."

He released me long enough to make a dramatic gesture over his heart, but as I started to move away, he had me again.

Bessie bolted through the back door, and we haven't located her yet.

"That's when it happened, Mr. Swanson! It being a warm day, your wife had the front door open, and this creature just ran right in without ringing or knocking or anything. Right into our meeting, mind you!"

I could hear Helen's voice in the living-room. Things seemed to be quieted down, and she was trying to explain or apologize or something, and she was telling her mother to be quiet.

The pastor kept right on going: "Mr. Swanson, in proper modesty over the remarks being made by Mrs. Christopher, I had lowered my eyes, or I might have seen him coming."

"Seen who, Dr. Thornquist?"

"The midget, Mr. Swanson, the midget!"

"Oh!"

"The most horrid little creature you have ever seen, Mr. Swanson. All dressed up in knee-length shorts and a pith helmet."

"A what?"

"A pith helmet—like Frank Buck."

"Oh."

"Yes. I looked up just in time to see him run into the room and approach Mrs. Christopher from the rear. Mr. Swanson, this thing—this diminutive monster—leaps up into Mrs. Christopher's arms, flings his little arms around her neck, flashes those vulgar little eyes at the assembled ladies and shouts: 'Okay, baby, where's the gin?' I tell you, Mr. Swanson, it was evil!"

Still looking for a glimpse of Helen, I muttered: "I'm sure it was."

Dr. Thornquist fanned himself with a handkerchief. "Simply outrageous, Mr. Swanson!"

"What became of the midget?"

"He raced back out of the house and leaped into a taxicab that was apparently waiting for him. It was terrifying! I don't know what it might mean."

Mother let out a yell, and the alligator smacked her across the back of the legs, propelling her into the eggnog bowl.

At this point we were suddenly joined by a little old lady who looked something like a fashionably dressed version of Whistler's Mother. She affixed Dr. Thornquist with a burning eye and said: "Have you called the FBI yet?"

Dr. Thornquist nodded toward me. "Mr. Swanson is here now, Mrs. Finch, and he will handle the matter properly, I'm sure."

She didn't seem too satisfied. "Well, I think you better get plenty of law out here right now. If you ask me, it was one of the pygmy white-slavers from South America!"

Mrs. Finch left us with that thought, and in the moment that Dr. Thornquist turned in an effort to reply to her, I slipped into the dining-room and then into the front reception hall.

Helen was at the door saying understanding farewells to the departing guests. She was too busy to acknowledge me, but she shot me one of those looks that would halt a fast freight. I stood there for moment nodding to the ladies, and Helen finally gave me an icy-sweet: "Darling, will you see if Mrs. Christopher is all right?"

Back to the kitchen I went, and discovered that they had removed Mrs. Christopher from the kitchen floor to the divan in the living-room. The woman in the low heels was putting cold cloths on Mrs. C's head, and the fallen community leader was now conscious again—but looking pretty much like warmed-over death. She kept muttering something about keeping it out of the papers. Mrs. Finch was still buzzing about, advancing her "pygmy white-slaver" theory to everyone in earshot—and although Mrs. Christopher pretended not to hear it, I had the notion she was right pleased at the thought that she had been seized by any kind of a white-slaver—pygmy or otherwise.

It must have been about five-thirty before we got the house cleared. Dr. Thornquist was the last to go. He suggested that we have a cordon of police thrown about the house. I assured him I would take care of everything, and he assured me he would be praying for us.

Fortunately, the kids were playing over at the Beltons' house. I wouldn't have wanted them to see their mother taking a straight drink. Poor Helen! Usually she would hardly touch even a mild highball. But she asked me to pour her a beaker of brandy, and she tossed it down like a villain in a Western movie. Nobody was saying anything except Helen's mother. Of course, she was rattling away like always, but in ten years I had learned to sort of tune her out, and I don't really recall much of what she said. I did get the idea that she knew the afternoon's catastrophe was Uncle Everett's doing, and there was a remark about "blood lines always showing through."

Mostly, though, I just looked at Helen. My wife was never a social climber or anything like that; but she was, you might say, ambitious for her family. And the Ladies' Guild did include a lot of what they call the "nicer families." I tried to explain that

"Have you called the FBI yet?"

obviously none of the guests realized her husband's uncle had been behind the whole mess. But she said that Everett and the midgets would be sure to come back and stay with us, and that then the whole story would get out. She was pretty upset, and with her mother yapping: "I tried to tell you, Helen Louise, I tried to tell you before you married him, but you wouldn't listen"—well, it was just no good.

Finally Helen took all of that she could stand and said: "Mother, please *shut up!*"

I had never heard Helen talk to her mother like that, but it worked wonders. The old gal promptly burst into tears, moaned "You're getting to be just the way they are!" and went upstairs to her room.

HELEN and I didn't say anything else about it. The kids came in, and we had a cold-cut supper in the kitchen. I guess children sense things, because for once they all three went off to bed without a struggle.

It was while we were washing the dishes that Helen finally got around to conversation. She wasn't mad any more, but you could tell she was all hurt and confused inside.

"It's just so stupid, George. We've been married ten years. We've worked hard together. I've saved and planned and budgeted to help you. I've tried to make a lovely home for you. When you got your promotion last year, you said it was partly due to me—that a man's business associates often judge him by his wife. We were able to buy this house—something I've always dreamed of for myself and my children—*and* my husband. We've been accepted, invited into the Ladies' Guild and the country club. Then this afternoon, the very first time I've been able to show *my* house to the Guild, my first time as a hostess, it's all ruined! And why, George? Because you won't grow up enough to keep that madman from wrecking your life as he has his own. The rest of your family has shunned him for years, but you seem actually to encourage the man!"

I started to try to say something, when the door chimes sounded. I looked at Helen. She closed her eyes, resigned to the worst. The easiest way seemed the best, so I simply called out: "Come in!"

Not Uncle Everett, not the midgets, but Dr. Thornquist fairly burst in on us. The three hours that had separated his departure from his return had worked wonders. The man was wreathed in smiles. We asked him to sit down, but he wanted to give it to us upright. "Mr. and Mrs. Swanson," he began, "I am a harbinger of glorious things to come. I have simply glorious news that may somehow take the taint off your day."

Frankly, neither Helen nor I could say a word. We just stared.

Dr. Thornquist reconsidered that chair and took one. "As you know, I drove Mrs. J. Scott Christopher home in my car this afternoon, and less than a block from her house we had an accident with a taxicab. Well, I thought that was all I could stand, but fortunately no one was hurt; and this charming, gallant man leaped from the cab and volunteered to pay for any damages that were incurred."

Helen and I could both sense what was coming, but we couldn't figure how it was going to be good news. The pastor continued: "This gentleman, a handsome fellow, looked into the cab and realized that Mrs. Christopher was not well. He asked where she lived, and when I told him just five houses down, what do you suppose he did?"

WHILE I mentally figured where I could get another job, Helen said flatly: "I have no idea."

"Mrs. Swanson, he said: 'Madam, if I may be permitted to use the fireman's carry,' and he swept Mrs. Christopher into his arms, over his shoulder and carried her to her house!"

Helen and I just looked at each other. Dr. Thornquist, still beaming, went on:

"Mrs. Christopher was charmed. We all went into her home, and our gallant gentleman introduced himself, and you will never guess who he was!" We didn't dare. Never breaking stride, Dr. Thornquist proclaimed: "Major Everett Swanson, your uncle!"

I think Helen said: "Not really!"

"Yes!" said Dr. Thornquist. "The Major is just back in the States after a two-year safari in Africa, and as coincidence would have it, was on his way to his hotel to telephone you at the very moment of the accident!"

I recalled that my comment was "What do you know!" Dr. Thornquist filled the gap, blessedly:

"But the best news of all, Mr. and Mrs. Swanson, is that Major Swanson has consented to speak at our Fellowship Dinner this coming Friday about his travels and experiences in the Never-Never land. Isn't it wonderful?"

Helen and I nodded quietly. She finally garnered courage to ask: "Was

I spent the entire day on the telephone, trying to locate Uncle Everett.

there anyone with him, Dr. Thornquist?"

The pastor seemed surprised. "Just the cab-driver."

Well, the sighs may not have been audible to the elated Dr. Thornquist, but let me tell you they were deeply satisfying. On assuring us that Major Swanson would be in touch with us soon, Dr. Thornquist took his leave of us.

Helen, a stalwart in times of stress, simply said to me: "Darling, let us pray." And we retired.

DR. THORNQUIST must have labored all night, for the morning mail brought the announcement that the speaker at Friday evening's Fellowship Dinner would be none other than the "distinguished world traveler and soldier of fortune, Major Everett Swanson, direct from his most recent adventures in the veldt."

I spent the entire day on the telephone. I called up every hotel within a radius of fifty miles, every listed tourist court, every boarding-house. Uncle Everett was no place to be found. The noon edition of the papers had a large story on the fact that Major Everett Swanson was in town and scheduled to speak at the dinner. Reporters called both my house and my office constantly. They could not find him, and thought I would know where he was. I gave them a wide variety of excuses, including one that he had flown to Washington to confer with Mr. Truman. That made the night editions. The midgets had not been seen again, and as far as any living soul in the city knew, Uncle Everett had simply vanished.

As of five-thirty on Friday evening, we had not found Everett. Nearly four days of manhunt that would have done credit to the FBI had produced nothing but jangled nerves and frustration. In panic, and not knowing what to do, I had manufactured a life story for Uncle Everett. It included the Boer War, the Victoria Cross, battling Fuzzy-Wuzzies, exploring the South Pacific and swimming the English Channel. Why any reporter worthy of the name would have believed any of it I do not know, but they all believed all of it and made it front-page material. I had a couple of old snapshots of Everett which I turned over to them, and they made three-column ten-inch enlargements for the front pages. We had suddenly become the most famous and prominent family in the State—but no Everett. The whole thing was like a monstrous nightmare.

It was at six that evening that the packages arrived; all were beautifully wrapped, and one for each member of the family. Each of the kids got a fifty-dollar savings bond and a Mickey Mouse watch; I got a solid gold cigarette case, Helen a magnificent brooch, and her mother a four-volume set of the works of Sigmund Freud—in German. One small card came with the lot. It read: *"You are magnificent! Real Swansons! Could not have done better myself. See you tonight. All my love to* most *of you. Everett."*

It was one of those moments when we didn't know whether to laugh or cry. So we got dressed and headed for the Fellowship Dinner. Helen's mother stayed behind with the children and her set of Freud in German. For a woman who experienced some difficulty deciphering *Time,* Mother seemed game enough about her gift.

The dinner was like most such affairs for everyone except us. The photographers very nearly outnumbered the guests. Mrs. Christopher greeted us as peers of distinction. We were the most sought-after people in the hall with one exception—Everett.

As we were finishing dessert, I really began to get worried. And then he appeared—Major Everett Swanson; and so help me, he was wearing knee-length shorts, a tailored battle jacket to match, and a pith helmet! I actually don't know where he came from, but all of a sudden he was there—standing in front of the head table, waving the pith helmet to the crowd as the applause sounded and the flashlight bulbs went off. I didn't dare look at Helen.

Dr. Thornquist's introduction was brief but glowing, and he ended up with a reference to the Major's recent conferences in Washington with the President. I kept watching for the midgets. They never appeared.

EVERETT took over that audience like nothing you have ever seen, and for two hours held them in the palm of his hand. He discussed Communism; he outlined the strategy of the defeat of the Kremlin both on the spiritual and military fronts; he discoursed on world economics and the methods of fighting inflation at home. He told stories of his experiences in forbidden Tibet, of his search for the missing diamond of Kualamingoli in the veldt. He even sold me. I got so interested that I forgot to worry. And to top it all off, Uncle Everett gave a soul-stirring call to arms on behalf of "every decent, civilized creature in the world today to fight the depraved forces of degradation which would take away from us that most precious freedom—the freedom to live, love, laugh as individuals of free will and dignity!"

It was tremendous. And when at last he sat down, the entire assemblage came to its feet and gave him as thunderous an ovation as I have ever heard. And as I looked to my right, whom should I see applauding until I thought she would blister her hands? My one-time distraught spouse Helen.

"The horrid little creature ran right in without knocking or anything."

IT was after one in the morning when we finally got home, and Helen was still aglow. We had been photographed with the Major—photographed separately, interviewed again and congratulated. And the crowning glory was that Mrs. J. Scott Christopher herself had informed Helen that the Swanson family was "made" now. She even said she was going to see to it that Helen became chairman of the World Affairs Committee of the Ladies' Guild. Oh, it was a night of triumph.

Before we left the dinner, Uncle Everett had assured us that he would join us at the house. We waited up for him until nearly four-thirty, but he never showed. The telegram came the next morning. It read:

> DEEPLY REGRET THAT CIRCUMSTANCES DEMAND MY IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE STOP HAVE BEEN OFFERED SHORTSTOP SPOT WITH SAINT LOUIS BROWNS STOP BEWARE OF THIRSTY MIDGETS. LOVE EVERETT.

Well, that's the way it went. It's been some time now since we've seen Everett. For weeks Helen checked the sports pages on the Browns' games, but to no avail. We're still pretty hot stuff in the community, though, and to date no revisitations from midgets. I have no idea when we'll see Everett again, but frankly I hope that it's real soon.

As I say, I like the guy.

Whether this man paid by death or by prison, it would kill the eagle thing, the free thing, the strongly gentle thing. He, the Sheriff, would have killed it. "God of honest men, show me what I ought to do!" the Sheriff prayed.

by MACKENZIE COTTRELL

The

SHERIFF MARTIN was a good man with a boat; but the man who had been his friend, but now his enemy whom he followed, handled a boat like some young god of the sea. Five hours ago the Sheriff had thought: *Rob, you fool, you're running yourself into weather you don't reckon on!* Now he knew, as he should have known before, that Rob was no fool—unless the recklessness of courage itself was folly—and that the boat was deliberately headed into the hurricane. The realization caused the Sheriff to scratch his own young and blond head. It was something that simply did not happen. The governments of the world spent millions on weather services whose main object was to keep people out of hurricanes. At the utterance of the word, great liners solemnly changed course, the schooners fled like doves before the hawk, the little boats of the coasts hid timidly in rivers, creeks and bays.

Yet before the Sheriff a cockleshell of a sloop was steered flyingly and beautifully into ever-worsening weather, that fringed weather that was racing seas, strong gales, whole gales and the Force Twelve of hurricane. The Sheriff had known of the storm two days ago while the chase was still overland; but he had assumed that Rob, cut off from the weather advisories, could not know it. Two hours ago Rob had settled that. Putting one foot on the tiller, he had stood up and turned his naked-shouldered back to the wind, extended his left arm horizontally to the left and curved the fingers of his left hand fractionally forward. Then he had sat down and steered for the point of the compass toward which the fingers had pointed. It had been one of the variations of the Buys Ballot law for determining position of the center of an advancing hurricane—and the boat was heading for the center.

For the last hour the Sheriff had thought: *He's bluffing—and I don't bluff!* Half an hour ago he had amended it to: *By gum, the stubborn son of a gun may not be bluffing, at that!* He now made the further amendment, incredulous, astounded, somehow touched with a quickening of the heart: *He isn't bluffing—and I got to take it from there!*

He stood up to get a better view of Rob. From the leaping boat a quarter-mile ahead, Rob regarded him. Rain stung over them, hissing on the gray of the frothing sea, and a great restlessness sighed from sky to sky. If they were going to get ashore, they had to get ashore soon! Rain that cried as it flew, blotted out the boat ahead and hurt the Sheriff's skin. Then the boat ahead came into view again, and its occupant smiled briefly and grimly. And the Sheriff knew, as he had already known, that the man ahead was too good a seaman not to know that he was flying toward death, but that if the Sheriff did not quit and let the fugitive make one of the thousand hideouts of the keys—whence he could vanish into the lost man's land of the West Indies—he as certainly meant to take the Sheriff with him. Admittedly it would be a splendid death, with sea and sky screaming a requiem to which earth trembled as to earthquake; but the Sheriff wished to live. He sat down and scratched his blond head again.

The boats pounded on. The racing gray skies ran lower. The rain squalls increased. Above them the whole great wheel of the sky was turning to the counter-clockwise spin of hurricane. Already it was a question if they could make the keys that lay below the sky to the east. And if they ran for the open Gulf, trying for what an irate mariner had once described as the allegedly navigable quadrant of the storm, the weather was still likely to be such that they would swamp. The Sheriff gave his hair a last energetic poke and took out his handkerchief. He fastened it to the shrouds, and it stood out stiffly, as a small but demanding flag of truce. Then he brought the boat into the wind. Ahead, Rob's boat also came into the wind. The Sheriff lit his pipe—with difficulty—and kept his hands about it.

WITH the flutter of the little flag, Rob's boat skirted back toward him, lying wildly over to the wind, and in the pallor of flying rain, Rob's face and body showed bronze-dark; the body wide of shoulder and slim of hip as he sat easily in the climbing and falling boat with a powerful arm strained to the tiller.

"You want you should speak to me, Sher'ff?" his voice came across the water through the whistle of the wind.

Keeping his hands about his pipe, the Sheriff shouted reasonably: "Rob, this isn't getting us anywhere!"

The deep, soft voice with its cold undernote of anger came back to him. "You're wrong there, Sher'ff. It's gettin' us inter a blow, Sher'ff, as you may be guessin'. . . . Ever seen a hurricane at sea, Sher'ff—or only from

GREAT GALE

a house? Ever seen the sea when the wind's blowin' so the sea an' the air gets mixed so you drowns without gettin' under water? . . . Well, you're soon goin' to!"

"Give it up, Rob! You aren't a fish yourself!" the Sheriff shouted mildly. "Come on in ahead of me, and I'll do what I can to make it easy for you."

"I'm not comin' in, Sher'ff! What you does is up to you."

"This way, it's curtains sure. . . . Come back, and you've a chance!"

"Go back while you've a chance, Sher'ff," Rob called. "Ain't much o' a chance now—nex' minute, it can be no chance a-tall. . . . Go on back, law-man. Want to see your friends again, Sher'ff?"

"Sure do," the Sheriff agreed. "But I don't aim to go back."

"Reckon we'll have to see who changes his mind first," Rob said, softly. He put the flying boat about and resumed his course into the storm. The Sheriff sighed, unhitched the handkerchief and resumed the course.

"You're in a right bad spot, Sher'ff," Rob mocked down the wind. "You ain't the right nature to shoot a man when he can't shoot back. I ain't a mind to care if you should. You cain't take me without shootin', fer there ain't time—so git on back!" The Sheriff slightly corrected his own boat

They ran at a steady twelve miles an hour, and even that kept Rob working to pick up the frogs.

on the course. "You can tell 'em I drownded!" Rob taunted him wryly. "'Sher'ff fearlessly follers crim'nal inter ragin' hurricane! Sees murd'rer perish!' Sounds good, Sher'ff—but nothin' ain't goin' to sound nohow effen you don't go back right now!" He suddenly faced the Sheriff fully, his face grave and oddly gentle. "Go on back, Sher'ff! Don't be a fool."

"Tell me why you done it—an' maybe I'll think it over."

The stubborn voice came back: "There's naught to tell."

Chapter Two

YOU did not tell of the leather toughness, strong as good leather, that was Ma, of the kindliness withdrawn by age that was Gran, of the shrill loyalty of a leggy little girl that was Shrimp, of the pity of something that wanted pretty things, and to play—and ended in humiliation and the terror of despair—that was the seventeen-year-old woman beauty of Puppy. You didn't talk of anger that made hands and arms burn in the rain, of pain that tore in a man's chest as the ache of bodily exhaustion and the throb of broken ribs could not pain.

In the forward boat, Rob Tally's arms wrenched to the tugging tiller, and on the great muscles of his arms the needles of rain stung like hail. And the violence was not violent enough for the violence that could be in a man. He lifted his eyes to the great sky that was blind loneliness of flying scud; but inside him it was six months ago and dark night, still as a mirror, so that the waterway through the flatness of the 'Glades showed like deep steel that someone had polished, and in it the dark walls of the maiden cane were reflected darkly against the carpeted reflection of the stars. The bulb-bottomed leaves of the water hyacinths were a mat of little gleams of starlight, and the lilac flower spikes were faint, pale gray; but as his eyes adapted to the night, the wide leaves of the bonnets showed shinier than the water. He was tired from working all day at the lumber mill; but if you hadn't got capital, you had to get ahead by drawing on yourself. Then one day you could get an airboat. His eyes watched the changing silhouette of the cane, for there should be the broken trunk of a strangler fig just about here, but he didn't want to put on his light to find it. To keep his secret, was why he had doused the light a quarter-mile back.

Then he saw the fig, turned the boat sharply to port, and felt the bow tossing the bonnet leaves and the tender stalks of the outer fringes of the cane. Then the boat checked in the stronger rampart of the cane. He pulled in his stob-pole and went to the bow, grasped the silky cane stalks and heaved the boat into them. Then he stepped overboard into the muddy crevices between the cane, and shouldering the cane aside, heaved the boat through the screening brake. Then he was in the narrow waterway, no more than a yard wide, that led to the lake. . . . Here the cane-tops almost met above him, and he steered by the winding strip of stars between the long leaves and feathered tops. This was "unsurveyed lands;" he guessed because the engineers couldn't get through the cane and sawgrass country of the 'Glades except in a boat, and a boat wouldn't go straight, and his father had said that unless an engineer could look plumb important going in a straight line in leggings and a helmet, he was just too plumb miserable to go at all.

TONIGHT, around the enormous circle of the horizon, the summer storms were towering, too far away for you to hear the thunder, but so that the cumulus tops were lit with inner lightning that made them sudden hot gold and dove pink before they sank back into invisibility. Ducking to pass under the leaning stump of a hurricane-blasted tree, he decided he'd bring an axe next time, and clear it out before it gave way into the channel. Once a heron rose, squawking. About him now, the cane changed to fields of short sawgrass like a meadow, but actually veiling tortured coral formations that could break your leg pretty as you pleased. And the air got sweeter than a jasmine bank or Ma's gardenia bushes; so sweet you seemed to feel it on your skin as well as in your nose, and that came from the fallen stars that gleamed everywhere through the grass—the starry spider lilies.

One lily was right at the edge of the waterway, and he stooped to grasp the round, green stem and yank up the great cluster of ice-white flowers and pointed buds as a gift for Puppy. And the scent almost made him unsteady on his feet. Then, in the next

canebrake, he flashed on his head-lamp—and at once the immediate world glowed green-gold at him. Crowded cane stalks showed touches or rose and purple; green was greener than by day; the dark brown water showed its secret life of alligator gars and descending lily-pad stalks, and the great music of the swamp rang louder in his ears as if it answered the secret miracle of light. And with a final powerful thrust against the pole, he emerged into the lake.

AGAINST the lake's varied skirts, everywhere were the pop-eyes and pale waistcoats of frogs. It was, as it had been when he had seen it for the first time a week ago, the froggiest place in all Florida. It was a gold mine, even for a man who couldn't afford an air boat: plenty of soap for Ma, canned milk for the kids, store teeth for Gran, a gift for Puppy. . . . Back along the waterway, the sudden chorus of disturbed life began again. Rob doused the light and stood listening. There was the flutter and scurry of unknown wings that had marked his own entry into the cane and the annoyed comments of frogs and loons. Then, in an exact repeat performance, the heron rose, squawking loudly, into the night. There was purely no doubt that a boat was following him! Who? An Indian? A game warden wondering if he was after forbidden plume-birds or was "shining" deer? He strained his eyes toward the lily-set entrance to the lake. But while you saw countless things dimly, you could see nothing sharply.

He couldn't understand how anyone had picked up his entrance into the cane. No one had worked this lake, or there wouldn't be so many frogs. No one who didn't already know the entrance would have been able to tell, particularly by night, that a boat had been yanked through the canebrake, for the cane sprang right up again. He moved the boat slightly, trying to get the reflection of a star across the entrance to the lake; in moving the boat, he pushed it into a piled mass of water hyacinths, and glancing back, was astonished because the hyacinths glowed with pale flecks of green fire. He knelt and touched a fleck with his finger, and his finger shone, while to his inquiring nose came the scent of phosphorus. He bent to look over the side of the boat. And the side that had been away from the landing where he kept the boat—so he wouldn't have seen it as he got in—the under curve of the stern and part of the side showed streaks and glints of green fire.

Indignation burned in him. . . . Someone had wanted to know where he had got his big catch of frogs last week, and had smeared the boat with phosphorus! There had been no way he would see it until it brushed off on the cane—and by then it would have been too late even if he had looked back and noticed it. The 'Glades were everyone's hunting ground; but to trick a man into revealing his particular frog-pond was treachery. Rob washed his hand with a rag and swabbed off the side of the boat, but there were still faintly glowing patches. Then he picked up the stob-pole and headed fiercely for the entrance to the lake. He was trembling with anger, and drove the boat so that the ripples fanned out from the bow, and the pole made alternate trails and circles of starry ripples. Then he knew that the other boat was retreating before him.

Again the irritated heron went up. Again the owl protested. Rob increased his speed, sending the boat surging down the waterway. Far ahead of him, he could hear the swishing progress of another boat. He shouted: "You dirty sneak-thief, effen I purely catch up with you, you'll be plumb sorry!" Only a heavy though distant splash and the swish of disturbed birds answered him, and somewhere far away a panther screamed. The strange boat was perhaps a hundred yards ahead of him as he neared the cane fringe that blocked off the wider waterway. He put all the strength of his body against the pole—there was a splintering crash; the boat reared, tipped and went over, hurling him into the water. Ahead, he heard muttered laughter, the sounds of a boat being hauled through the cane, then the faint and receding sounds of a pole dipping in the waterway.

Rob stood up in the water that was warm to his shoulders, and studied what had happened. The man in the other boat had tipped the big rotted stump across the waterway. Rob's old boat had crashed into it with all his power behind it—and the boat was just a sorry mess of burst boards. The head-lamp battery, his gear and the early part of the night's catch had vanished. He was also five miles from the highway, and he was going to have to take his time getting back to it. With his jaw muscles swollen with rage, he dived for the lantern and the gear and gradually fished them out of the mud and water. After he had them assembled, he carried them into the cane and hid them under a dwarf strangler fig. Then he came back to the waterway, and sat on the exposed part of the stump while he took off his clothes and his boots, tied them into a ball with the boot laces and fastened them round his neck with his belt. Then he set out to swim down the waterway, and didn't relish doing it. . . . Moccasins didn't usually bother a man unless he bothered them. But if you swam into one dozing by the cane, it could purely well strike you in the face. But he couldn't wait for daylight! If he did, he wouldn't be on the job to take out the logging crew from the mill, and he could lose his job.

He swam steadily, alert for the rippled passage of snakes, while his mind sought for the man who had played the trick on him. Pete was the only Indian who frogged this part of the 'Glades, and Pete was his friend. No Indian would have needed the trick of the phosphorus if he had wanted to follow. The regular white froggers were good-natured fellows who'd never wreck another man's boat or risk his life by leaving him to swim out of the swamp. It had to be someone too lazy to find their own frog-ponds, greedy enough to be tempted by his last catch and mean enough to wreck his boat. Loop Huber fitted it all. Loop's principal business was his juke joint and tourist camp on the trail, but he frogged when frogging was good enough. Loop had spoken carelessly about buying an air-boat next time he went to Tampa. And Loop had known about Rob's big catch. He'd think it fine to trick a man into showing his grounds, and how a man got out of the swamp without a boat would be a roaring joke to him. Rob's hands clenched to fists, and reaching the cane fringe, he stopped to throw a few extra stones into it before he worked his naked body through so that he could be sure of not getting snake-bit before he got to see Loop after work today.

Then he was in the wide waterway.

HE figured he'd swim it to a point near the Trail, then wade ashore and try to hitch a ride from a passing trucker. But the current and the seaward-moving water meadows of hyacinths slowed him up. The current was not fast, and the hyacinths were not heavy, but while he pushed the blooming legions aside, the full and tranquil current took what he had gained. It was like trying to fight one's way through a feather bed. Presently the sky to the east had a lip of pale blue steel against the flat blackness of the world. Then the sun was up, and all ahead up the waterway were water hyacinths, lovely as massed orchids; the stream so packed with hyacinths that it lay like a winding carpet of close-set, curled and almost level green, massed and splashed with blunt spikes of lilac blossom as if some gardener had tidied an endless garden bed through the wilderness of the swamp. No man could swim there until they had passed, and their passage might take days.

Rob climbed out onto the bank amongst the cutting clumps of sawgrass and the greenish-cream splashes of elder flowers, put on his boots and began to cut them—his only pair—to bits on the fantasy of the coral formations; moving a careful step at a time through the delicate yellow-green of willows, threading through young strangler figs, glossy and dark, round bigger figs overturned by hurricane, forcing his way through the rich drapery of wild grape, moonflower vines and giant ferns. Mad jags of coral broke under his feet into pits that formed small caves. What appeared to be solid earth revealed itself as bridges of rotting vegetation and gave way. Gnats feasted on him, and the heat increased. Then clouds rolled over the sun and there was a downpour. He had lost his boat; he reckoned he had lost his job.

Chapter Three

FOR Ma, everything in the day had been special. Morning that was such a shout of light that it was as if there was competition between the sea and the morning, so that the morning was shining bright but the light struck up from the sea and ran on the ceiling, making a shadow for the big gray velvet spider asleep on a beam, and ran all gold over rusted iron and unpainted wood and the west window mended with cardboard. The ugliness of the room had worried her for years, but this morning it had looked very beautiful. There was wonder in the rippled sand outside, waiting promise in the iron stove, added keenness in the good smell of frying fish and tomatoes and grits. The hair of the two little girls was unbelievably pale and silken, inviting her hand. Even the washing of dishes in the hot suds of homemade soap was precious when suddenly one was to be taken from it. She thought: *I wish't we could think like dyin' whilst we hain't.* Love, too, took on a sharper focus: The strong, hard love between her and Rob's dead father. The love that was like love for lambs for the little girls, Rob's sisters. The love for Rob, who had the thing she thought best of all things, which was being countable on.

At intervals through the day, and now as she hurried with supper, her hands went to the hardness low in her side whose meaning the doctor had told her yesterday, and each time it was a reminder that she must plan quickly for Rob, who had taken up his father's responsibility while his own body was still silken young with boyhood. The supper tonight was going to be a sort of telling him thank you. In the oven was a sweet-pertater pone that was golden and high. There was preserved ginger from the bed he'd made her, a heaping platter of fried shrimps each in its own crisp jacket of batter seasoned with garlic. There was greens and bacon and a salad of palm-hearts. For dessert, there was preserved coco-plums and jelly with coconut cream over it. . . .

Sunset, that was so different from sunrise, was on the ceiling in deep rose when she went to the door and saw him coming, and knew by the set of his shoulders that something was the matter. He straightened his shoulders and waved as he saw her, and she knew again that the little girls now playing down on the sand-spit were good and pretty, but they were not of the stuff Rob was of. . . . If she was quick, they would be happy in new homes getting care that Rob couldn't give them without her. It was for Rob that she had made the doctor tell her what the chances were, and then had decided not to play the ten-per-cent chance she might have had. It wouldn't have been good enough. She would have had to go to a hospital right off. If the chance hadn't worked, she would have been too ill to arrange things. This way she had time for arranging, and she was not going to tell Rob until everything was arranged and until there was no chance that might just wear him with hope that would come to nothing. She was giving him his chance at finding what she and his pa had had. All she couldn't shake was the hold of things that belonged to her, the pang that the doing of familiar things was ending. You got so set on your things and your doings, it made you selfish so you wanted to try even a littlest chance. So you kept thinking: *Just maybe I could keep them!*

Rob came in smiling at her. But he was scratched and bitten almost into unrecognizability, and one arm was bandaged and nested in his torn shirt. She said: "Set down!" And he dropped staggeringly into the barrel chair. She brought him coffee, and he drank it gulpingly. He said troubledly: "I got bad news. Someone follered me to the pond an' set a log fer me."

"Who?"

"I reckon it was Loop—but I ain't sure. He's gone jukin' to Tampa. Anyway, the boat smashed, an' it took me so long to get out I was hurryin' like a fool, and took a header down the canal bank an' my arm went down a hole as I turned over, an' broke a wrist bone, an' I got fired at the mill." He smiled ruefully at her. "I reckon that's about all the mess a man can get hisself in in one night."

She said: "We got fried shrimps an' s'prises fer supper."

A little of the tiredness and pain left his face. "I'd fergotten I was hungry—but I sure am!"

She called: "Mildred! Alice!" The little girls answered: "Comin', Ma!" As she turned back to the room, he was looking with troubled eyes at the soles of his shredded boots. "The rock about spoiled 'em. I sure hate to spend on another pair!" His boots were a joke between them, because he hated putting out money even for the secondhand boots he bought at the Army Surplus. She thought: *I can't recall he ever had a new pair.* Suddenly the pang of things ended—and of the ten-per-cent chance she might have taken—let go of her. She thought: *I had two men that didn't think on themselves. When a woman's had that, she can do a bit of givin'.* She was happy as they sat down to the good supper.

ROB knew how angry Puppy was as soon as he entered the Caldwell cabin where the wind swept in from the sea. Gran'ma Caldwell was knitting by the oil lamp, and ten-year old Shrimp was spraddled on the floor threading leaders. But they both smiled and said: "Sit down, Rob!" Gran'ma asked: "What's wrong with your arm, boy?"

"I broke it, but it ain't bad," Rob said.

Puppy was also by the lamp with a book in her hands, but she did not look up. Her hair was all curling and tangled browns and golds, and the round and lovely lines of her face were grown-up and hard. He said: "Hello, Puppy." Puppy said: "Good evenin'." Shrimp said: "She's mad at you."

Gran'ma Caldwell said an ineffective: "Hush!"

"He'll soon find out!" Shrimp said raucously. Puppy banged down her book and walked out onto the uncovered porch, from which you saw the glitter of the Gulf under the early setting moon. Gran'ma said: "She's got a cold. Take the shawl fer her, Rob."

Outside, the wind was licking up the clean shell-riffles of the key from the water that was blue even in the moonlight, and cold clouds were running across the moon.

Rob went to put the shawl round Puppy's shoulders, and she jerked away from him. He said fondly: "You needn't all take pneumonia just because you're mad at me, Puppy!"

"You lost your job," Puppy said. "You lost it because you was pokin' round in the 'Glades. Now you won't even be able to go to Tampa fer my birthday."

He said slowly: "It weren't my fault I lost my job. It were someone throwed a log to wreck my boat."

"All I know is it wouldn't have happened if you hadn't been in the 'Glades. All I know is other girls go places to see a movie, maybe, or to stop for ice cream—but you're always savin' fer gigs or barrels or ice or gas or somethin' or other! If we does go out, we just have to drive past every place that looks fun—"

He flushed with anger. Yet it was true that he had taken Puppy riding when they couldn't go in for the fried oysters or apple pie or hot chocolate that perfumed the nights outside the cafés. He said gently: "It ain't my fault, Puppy, as there's the little ones an' Ma. An' I ain't apologizin' fer them. What they's had has always been mine, an' what I has will be theirs until I get ahead to where they don' need as much—"

"I mayn't always want to stop fer fried oysters or fer chocolate—an' if you'd just take a steady job an' keep to it—"

"I helt a steady job till I was fired. I can't keep to one alone, because you cain't get enough ahead on loggin' wages. . . . I'm real sorry, Puppy, that I can't give you more good times." He put his arm round her. "I'd go short to give you somethin' you wanted effen it would do any good! But it don't. It just is some men has folks to care fer an' some don't, an' wouldn't if they had!"

"If you're slappin' at Loop, leastways he don't take a girl out just to make her hungry!"

"No," Rob said slowly. "He usually has a sight more in mind when he takes a girl out!" He twisted her about. "You been out with him, Puppy?"

"That's my business!"

"Is it effen I tell you he ain't right fer no respectable girl? Effen I tell you I'm near sure it was him what busted my boat?"

"Effen you never get another boat, it'll be somethin' to keep you out o' the 'Glades!"

He lifted her angry child's face to make her look at him. "To some women, it wouldn' be needful to say this. I likes the 'Glades, but I don't go there fer fun. After a day with the logs, it'd be purely good to go to bed. I go to the 'Glades because I gotta. I go fer the folks an' fer you—so we can get married one day!"

" 'One day' when I'm so old I has to be lifted out o' old rockin' chair?"

His hand closed on her shoulder through the shawl. "I'm wonderin' if I'm makin' a mistake plannin' to marry-up with a girl that says 'I' all the time," he said slowly. "I reckon I might be wiser to look fer a girl as thought: 'I guess he'd purely like to go an' have a cup of hot chocolate too! I guess he'd like to go dancin'. I guess it gets right tiresome a-giggin' frogs around two an' three in the mornin'!' "

"I'd say that, Rob!" Shrimp called loudly from the shadows. "I'd help you gig effen it was me you wanted fer your girl!"

"Shrimp!" Puppy stormed.

"You shouldn' listen to other people talkin', Shrimp!" Rob said gravely. "But I sort of guess you might help a man, at that. . . . Now scram!"

"I'd do most anythin' fer you, Rob!" Shrimp shouted. "I'd help your ma with the kids. I'd figure what was yours was mine, Rob. I wouldn't even want hot chocolate effen you took me drivin'—"

Puppy rushed at her; Shrimp fled.

"She's indecent!" Puppy said disgustedly.

"She's ten," Rob said. "An' I reckon she has some mighty wise thoughts, at that. Leastways for Shrimp the whole world don't begin an' end with Shrimp! She purely imagines other people can get hurt an' want things too—"

"Meanin' what?"

"Meanin' that I love you so much it's like the sun goin' out when we aren't together—but I'm wonderin' effen you loves me one little mite! Effen lovin' you aren't like lovin' a picture that looks purty but can't love back."

"I said I loved you, ain't I?"

"Yes," he said slowly. "But Shrimp has somethin'. Effen you loves someone, you take what goes with them because it's yours along with theirs. . . . You maybe wishes things weren't so. But the worse they are, the surer you makes that you shares the hardness." He turned up the beauty of her face with his hand. "I sees your side of it. But I ain't goin' on bein' panned fer doin' what I knows to be right! Fer stickin' by Ma as stuck by all of us. Fer doin' things fer you effen you wants us to be together!"

"You lost your job because you was messin' in the swamp. Now we can't even go to Tampa fer my birthday! Now you expects me to sit home thinkin' of everyone else havin' fun—" Tears blossomed on her face like dew on a lily, and her lips trembled.

His distress for Puppy sitting at home added to his anger. "You mayn't know it," he said, "but there's purely lots in the world besides Puppy!" He turned and left her weeping by the ice-bright water. At the same time his heart was sick that he could not give everything the world held into her little hands that were still just dimpled at the knuckles like a child's. And through his anger, he kept seeing the despairingly bowed softness of her round neck where the tiny golden down of the nape met the live curls.

His injured arm throbbed, and he sighed, then started, for a small and horny hand had grasped his. "She ain't worth it, Rob!" Shrimp whispered. "Looks ain't everythin'," she added optimistically but without conviction.

"Know what?" Rob said, smiling down at the little girl. "I bet you're goin' to be purtier than Puppy or any girl in the 'Glades, give you five years!" The grin on the froglike, freckled face adored him. "Well, say six years, maybe," Rob amended.

"You wouldn't fool me, Rob?" Shrimp said desperately. "We been partners froggin', Rob! I'm a better shot than Puppy! She squeals at guns."

He swung her up to his wide shoulder and let her ride there all the way to the house. She locked a skinny and bramble-scratched arm about his neck.

Puppy wanted to run after Rob and say, "I'm sorry about your arm. I'm sorry about the boat! I do love you, I do love you!" But her hatred of the 'Glades and of his love for the 'Glades held her where she was. If he wasn't so obstinate about getting ahead and getting his own air-boat and buying the hammock he was always talking of, they could go to Tampa and be married and have a little apartment with a gas stove. And even if they were "short," they could walk in streets and see people, and there would be colored lights and drugstores and people would look at her in her high heels and her street dress, and sometimes they could go up to a movie house and she would know: *In a minute we'll have bought our tickets and we'll have our seats and music will be startin' from th' screen!* Part of her wanted streets and people so much she could hate Rob! Then the other part of her mind thought: *Right now he's achin' from his arm, and his heart's low because of my actin' so, an' if I ran an' held him, he'd be happy!* She suddenly wanted that more than anything—but when she reached the cabin, Rob was gone.

Chapter Four

UNDER the black line of trees on the bank of the big canal across from the red neon sign, "Fund's Fresh Fried Frog's Legs," the air-boats were like shallow metal sugar scoops rather than boats, rectangular in shape so that the bows were as wide as the beams, and the bottoms curved up to meet their squareness. At the sterns, airplane motors were mounted on metal stilts, with the propellers reversed so they pushed instead of pulled; and behind the propellers were the great air

rudders. Forward were the froggers' high chairs, often made of the bucket seat from a plane, and the steering lever stood up to port so that the frogger could hold the gig in his right hand and drop the captured frogs down a metal funnel between his legs into the storage sacks.

Even the canals were dirty near this Fresh Fried Frog's Legs place—full of tin cans and paper and discarded bottles; but the tourists stopped there so that there was a constant starting and stopping of engines, and the juke-box blared as Rob studied the boats in the rosy light from the sign. One boat had a *For Sale* notice on it. Probably Fund had taken it from an Indian who had run up a bill for hooch. Fund made a big profit on the boats he got that way. Rob squatted on his heels and studied the boat's polished metal perfection.

With such a boat, he could clean up sixty to seventy dollars a night from his pond even at seventy-five cents a pound for dressed legs. And right now, frogs were up to a dollar a pound. . . . Rising, he crossed the highway to the red and white hideousness of the frog house. Fund, fat and dark, in a purple shirt with yellow ducks on it was propped against the counter. Rob went up to the chrome counter. He said: "Hello. What price is the boat?" "Four hundred and fifty," Fund said. "Cash."

Rob rested his good hand on the counter. "I don't have any cash. . . . But I'll give you six hundred, terms."

"Not interested," Fund said. "What would I get if you smashed her up?"

"You'd get paid," Rob said. Looking at the counter, he said: "Loop's gone to Tampa. I reckon he's gone to buy a frog boat to make a killin' on my pond he tracked me to." There was bad blood between Fund and Loop. And Rob added: "I reckon he'll do a bit o' jukin' while he's away—that should give me two days before he gets back to clean up the pond. The rain today will have started the frogs scatterin', but they'll still be thick. You want Loop to get 'em?"

"How'll you frog one-handed?"

"I got a partner. I'll pay you a hundred a week on the boat—startin' with the first week's check." He watched Fund struggle with the temptation of the six hundred as opposed to his worry about the boat. He knew Rob would pay him, but he knew it was "crazy-biz" to let anything as valuable as an air-boat go without heavy down payment. "And where do I get off if you get killed?" Fund asked.

"If I get kilt, you're out o' luck," Rob said. "But I'm healthy." He smiled. "Six hundred dollars."

"I'd sure like to see Loop's face when he comes back and finds the pond frogged out!" Fund said. "I'm crazy as a loon, but I'll do it!" Rob's heart pounded in his chest with the incredibility that the boat was his. He said casually, "O.K. You better sign me up before I change my mind!" When he went out again and put his hand on the boat, he was shaking as if he had chills and fever. He had an air-boat! Now he had to solve the problem of a partner. From the darkness, Shrimp said shakily: "I can steer an air-boat! An' you can gig! I can steer an air-boat! I made Gran'pa Williams take me out this Spring. You don't need no other partner—"

He said sternly: "You purely got to quit follerin' me about like a man's shadow, Shrimp—an' it ain't right to listen in on other people's business!"

"You can paddle me if you wants," Shrimp said. Her voice shot up. "But I can steer an air-boat! Gran'pa Williams—"

"I'm not fightin' maybe you can steer," Rob said. "I don't reckon a weak ol' man like Gran'pa Williams would have a chance against you."

OLD-FASHIONED frogging had been adventure, but frogging from an air-boat was magic, Shrimp thought. The storms yesterday and last night had brought the water up, and when the moon set the 'Glades were first a tremendous darkness, then, as her eyes learned to look beyond the headlight, a sea tipped only with the emerging spears of grass and with occasional small islands. Almost, they were a sky of reflected stars under the sky of shining stars above, so that the motion of the boat was flight. Rob steered out along the canals that were marked by their freedom from grass tips—then turned off over the inland sea of the 'Glades. Finding an area free of islands, that marked the location of his pond, they "beat down" a hunting section; racing, side-slipping, whirling, so that the grass was beaten under and the insects disturbed. Shrimp liked the side-slip best of all. It was like sliding through the firmament, scattering the stars to waves and eddies of planets! In the beam of Rob's head-lamp, moths became a flower garden; moths of pure snow, like white periwinkle flowers, cream moths with black wings flushed with rose, like strange lilies, peacock moths that might be great orchids, and where the wild spider lilies clustered on the watery islands, humming legions of the sharp-pointed and quivering elephant moths. Gnats became clouds of pale gold sparks; and in the surrounding darkness, the green fire of fireflies blinked.

When an area was beaten down, Rob set a powerful gasoline lantern on a pole in its center, and swung the boat away so that the insects would gather and fall and the frogs come up. While this was happening, they beat down another water-meadow. Then the boat slid back to the first cleared area, Shrimp took the steering rod, and the actual frogging began. Shrimp had been told that the Indians frogged at twenty miles an hour, but most white men wouldn't risk this—they weren't quick enough to pick up the frogs at that speed—and Rob was afraid for his boat. He couldn't risk their wrecking it on the ever-present menace of unseen stumps. So they ran at a steady twelve miles an hour, and even that kept Rob working to pick up the frogs—at which the gig was not thrust, but allowed to glide with the boat's momentum. Big butter frogs were everywhere, white throats raised to gulp down the insects. Unlike most of the froggers, Rob killed as he caught, because he figgered it wasn't right to keep sacks full of frogs squirming wounded through the long night. To do it one-handed meant he had to hold the gigged frog down by gripping the gig handle between his knees, and use the beheading knife in his good hand. Killing was a handicap, for it meant they missed a certain number of catches. But Shrimp adored him for it. She had never really liked to eat frogs caught in the ordinary way. No one was like Rob!

Steering, she squealed her affection above the roar of the motor. "There's no one like you, Rob!"

He turned his head for a moment, his face grinning at her below the blaze of his headlamp. "Maybe that's as well."

"I 'preciate you, Rob; Puppy don't!"

His face changed and showed hurt, so that she wished she hadn't said it. "Maybe Puppy has a point."

"She doesn't!" Shrimp exclaimed. "She doesn't! It's that she hasn't the sense of a garfish! No one is like you, Rob!"

He smiled at her as the whirling clouds of moths rushed past. "I 'preciate your thinkin' so, Shrimp. Now get on with your steerin'!"

Across the distant 'Glades, other headlamps flew. "That will be Pete 'Fenokee," Rob said of a light that outraced all the others. Then from the direction of the Trail, two other boats were humming. Shrimp saw Rob frown in their direction. And she knew that he guessed that it was Loop and Loop's friends. Rob swung the boat to the second beaten area—and here the frogs were something! Even with the killing, they frogged so fast the sack had to be shaken down. The lights of the approaching boats grew brighter. Five minutes later, Loop came alongside. "Froggin' good tonight?" Loop asked, winking. He was big and handsome, but

Shrimp hated him because he was too pale and blond-curled, and too sure he was handsome. Rob cut the engine. "I reckon the froggin's as good as you reckoned it would be when you trailed me, night before last, Loop," he said quietly. "I can't prove it, so I wouldn't beat you up even if I hadn't broke my arm—but don't try any more tricks, an' don't hurt nothin' that's mine or I'll kill you."

Loop's teeth flashed between his full lips. "Now, how do you like that, boys? Ain't that inhospitable? I'd be real hurt—if Rob here owned anything." He looked at the boat. "What you have to promise Fund to beg the boat on credit, Rob?"

Rob started the engine. But Loop's tendency to torment that made him stick sandspurs under the puppies' tails and swerve his car to hit wild things on the Trail was on him. "Let's watch a hoomane frogger, boys! We couldn't see a helpless little frog suffer, could we, boys? Rob, here, is that hoomane he misses nine frogs out of ten strokin' the first and singin' it to sleep! Tells 'em bedtime stories too. . . . Only pity, his ma can't pay the grocer!"

Rob ignored him, and the boats ran side by side, Loop's boat spoiling the frogging on their port side. "I see froggin's good!" Loop said; "I'll have to try it for myself!" It was unwritten law that no one used another man's beat-down without invitation. But Loop and the boat with him began to work Rob's cleared place.

Rob took the steering rod from Shrimp, gunned the motor and caught up with Loop's boat. "Git goin' from here!"

"This is public land," Loop said, grinning. "Boys, Rob thinks he owns the swamp now."

"This is my beat-down!"

"Who says so?" Loop asked.

"I do!" Rob said.

"Well, what do you know? Tryin' to claim our beat-down when we been flattenin' it for the last hour? What do you say to that, boys?" Loop asked.

Rob's face was pale. And Shrimp knew that he was thinking he couldn't do anything against five of them, except keep running the boat at them so that fear of collision might drive them off. But he couldn't risk Shrimp in a collision that could well happen.

Then she caught the hum of a motor coming up from the south. The water over that way was dangerous, full of small cypress trees and old stumps, and no one but Pete 'Fenokee would be coming like that, throttle wide open, the boat flying and twisting through the darkness. Loop and the men in Loop's boat turned to look. And Pete and two of his Indians came, feathering spray, out of the night. They were going so fast, they swept past and the boats lay on their gunnels as they came round. The Indians' blouses looked like purple and orange moths' wings.

He decided he'd bring an axe next time, and clear the tree out before it gave way into the channel.

Rob shot his boat away from the boats from the camp, and Shrimp wondered what was happening. Next minute she knew, Pete 'Fenokee's boat came streaking straight at the boats from the camp. She gasped before impending collision. The men in the boats shouted—and Pete's boat missed them by inches so that the men's hair blew from the propeller wash, and the boats almost upset as they dodged. Simultaneously, the other Indians' boats passed the camp boats to starboard. And again they were turning in a long arc. Loop shouted and started the engine; there was confusion in the other camp boat. Then it too was moving as the Indians' boats came back; faster than ever this time, the propellers shrieking in a long whine. The camp boats were moving fast now, and Shrimp assumed both Indian boats would pass behind them—but Pete's didn't. He passed ahead of them, so that the bow of Loop's boat and the side of Pete's were separated only by inches. Loop and the men were yelling now, and heading in toward the reeds of a group of lily-islands, cutting the power and edging the boats in between the protection of the stumps. Shrimp shuddered that Pete might not see

Illustrated by
CLINTON SHEPHERD

"All I know is other girls go places, but you're always savin'."

the stumps, and might try again to "fan" them—but as they came around a third time, he slid beside the island and slewed to splash drowning spray over the men, who were poling across the islands back toward the main channel.

Without looking back, the Indians headed south to resume their frogging.

"Thanks," Rob shouted after them, and waved; but they could not hear, and if they saw, they gave no sign.

"Whew!" Shrimp said.

"We won't have no more trouble tonight," Rob said, smiling.

They'd never had as good frogging, and the sacks bulged beautifully.

By midnight, Shrimp could hardly keep her eyes open, but she would have died before she would have admitted it. They were working now along the black swell of a hammock, and there was something wonderful in the fact that it was just a secret black hump under the stars; and then as they turned their headlamps toward it, twin magic circles opened in which every fresh-water mangrove, every twisted strangler fig and draping moon vine, became visible. You could even see the sparks that were beads of dew in the great shining white moonflowers, and the feather patterns on the backs of the white herons that roosted on the higher trees. Fat, dark rats darted along the water's edge; an otter slid into the water. Then there was the flash of something tawny, like a great dog, that bounded back between the small trunks and the gold-green leaves. Rob cut the engine. "Panther! A big one."

Of all things Shrimp had ever wanted, apart from being allowed to help Rob, she wanted a panther skin most! And her eyes grew so big as she stared at the hammock that she was almost beautiful.

"Figurin' you'd like his skin?" Rob asked.

She could only nod. He smiled at her. "Well, do you know what my helper's goin' to have? A panther skin! Tomorrow we'll come early an' see effen we can't get him."

"Truly, Rob?" Her skinny arms locked round his neck.

"You're danged right!" he said, grinning at her fondly. Hugging his neck and pressing her cheek to it, she fought temptation. He had to take her home, then dress and ice the frogs. It would be late morning before they were ready for the market truck. She conquered the furred temptation that was the panther. Drawing a deep breath of the clean yellow-soap scent of Rob's neck, she said: "Nope. We got to get your boat paid first! We must have all of seventy dollars to the boat tonight, Rob."

"Half is yours and Gran's."

"Shrimp the millionaire, that's me!" Shrimp squealed.

The wonder of the most wonderful night of her life was too much for her; with a long, rapturous sigh, she was asleep against his chest.

Rob put her down carefully on the unused sacks on the floor of the boat. Asleep, she looked right nice.

Chapter Five

WITH Rob and Shrimp frogging at night, and Rob helping the snake man catch snakes part-time by day, by the time Rob's arm was well, the boat was paid for. And Gran and Shrimp both had a bank account. And if there was little over, Rob knew he was getting somewhere at last.

He'd never felt as good, and the 'Glades had never looked as good to him as on Puppy's birthday. For, as always, the great sky dwarfed the world and made human people mere specks in the loneliness of reeds and grass and water, but it was as if the sky also told people to love each other. And he called for Puppy in his old truck, taking with him a box of chocolate-coated peanuts round which he'd had Ma tie a bow of gold metal ribbon from Ma's scrap box, and a bunch of swamp flowers sheathed in tissue paper from a shoebox. He told Puppy: "Shouldn't give you 'Glades flowers after what you says o' the 'Glades, but maybe we'll both forgive you."

She laughed, and her eyes noticed his carefully sooted boots, the width of his shoulders under the clean blue shirt, the slenderness of his waist and hips in the neatly creased tan work trousers; and something touched her heart to tenderness. "It's purty!" she said of the pale wild roses, the little tan-and-yellow wild orchids and the three perfect pond-lily blooms in the bunch of flowers. His dark face flushed with pleasure, and he said: "I thought you'd like 'em when you stopped bein' angry."

They got into the old truck and rattled through the scented glitter of the 'Glades toward the highway, and

everything was flowering so that Puppy's new flounced pink dress seemed just a bigger flower. Through the high clouds, the sunlight fell in showered rays like a rain-shower of light. Bees choked the elderberry blossoms, and the daytime ipomea flowers were like the lilac and purple beginnings of storm. Rob pressed his hand over Puppy's. He asked: "A bit nice, ain't it?"

At the creek bridge they met Loop's car, its shininess contrasting strongly with Rob's rusted truck. Loop was dressed in a blue sports shirt and cream sharkskin trousers, and his fair hair was marcelled. He jumped out, winking at Puppy, and said: "Seems I'm late."

"Too late," Rob said.

Loop brought a florist's long box from his car, and a five-pound box of chocolates and candied fruit. "Happy birthday, Wild Flower!"

Rob said: "She don't want them!"

Puppy reached for the boxes, exclaiming with excitement. And as she lifted the lid, the chocolates were mounded high with potential creaminess, and the cubes of candied pineapple, pink half-pears and ruby cherries were the loveliest things she had ever seen. Then she opened the flowers. Against white paper lace and the living lace of baby's-breath lay sweeping gladioli in tones of orchid and pink, dewy pink and white roses, and the unreal velvet of pink camellias and moon-white gardenias. Where the stalks of the other flowers began was a corsage of white orchids; like something out of fairyland, like something that a fairy queen would wear! Puppy gasped and made crooning songs, and touched the flowers with her fingers, and her face got red with excitement, and her eyes shone.

"Give them back!" Rob said quietly.

She laughed and dimpled at him as she bent her face this way and that to the flowers, and clutched the box against her breast.

"They're too purty! Oh, they're just too purty! They're too purty to believe! Oh, I couldn't give them back!"

"A girl's got a right to something that don't come out of a marsh," Loop said. And he grinned at the bunch of swamp flowers.

Rob repeated harshly: "Give his flowers back, Puppy!"

Puppy looked at the dewy and scented masses of the store-bought flowers and at Rob with suddenly agonized horror. "No! Oh, no! *No!* They're real purty! I never had nothin' so purty—"

He tore the flowers out of her grasp as she wailed, and brought them down on Loop's head, telling Loop: "Now git your car out o' the way!"

Loop swore, tore the flowers from round his neck, pushed the mass in front of Puppy's bowed head into Rob's eyes; he smashed his fist against Rob's mouth and tried to gouge his eyes.

Rob went at him, across Puppy, throwing open the door so that Loop staggered off balance and missed the rock he tried to grab up. Then they closed with each other on the edge of the ditch. "I warned you afore!" Rob said. "An' don't reach fer no rocks, Loop!" Locked with Loop, he knew he'd have to depend on quickness, for while Loop was known for a coward when he couldn't fight unfair with rock or bought knuckles or by picking on a boy, he was powerful and outweighed Rob by sixty pounds. Rob twisted one foot behind Loop's knee, and thrust it forward while his body thrust against Loop's. And they went off balance and into the ditch, Rob on top. Water hyacinths and bonnets flew, water splashed, and they rolled in a mixture of mud and water. Loop's fist hit Rob on the side of the head above the ear. Rob drove his fist into Loop's heavy cheek—with the outrage of the wrecked boat behind it. The jar hurt the bones of his arm and up into his shoulder. Loop sagged, and Rob floundered to his feet, standing over Loop, who gazed muddily up at him. "Get the car moved!"

"Sure," Loop said—and kicked Rob in the stomach so that Rob felt the combined agony of inability to breathe and mad necessity for breath. If he did not breathe, he would die, but the agony of attempting to breathe was past facing. He strangled, writhing, as Loop splashed up and flung a clout of water hyacinth roots and mud into his face. Then with a spasm of white agony, his breath came back. He was on his feet and at Loop, hitting blindly from the pain of the trash in his eyes, missing half his blows, but somehow keeping Loop so busy that Loop's blows landed only on his shoulders. They fought up the far side of the ditch onto the twisted coral.

Loop tried to knee him in the groin.

They closed, and Loop's left thumb felt for Rob's eyes. Rob hugged Loop so that their cheeks pressed together, and Loop's hand found only his ear, twisting it with violence that threatened to pull it off. Rob freed his own right fist and struck past his own cheek to the back of Loop's ear, and Loop let go. They crouched at each other, gasping, Rob having to watch both Loop's feet and his fists. Loop would kick him again if he could. He was not going to kick Loop, but he stirred his own foot swiftly, and Loop's eyes flashed to it. In the same instant, Rob brought his left fist up under Loop's jaw with all the strength of his body. He felt Loop lift, seem to hang on the blow, and go limp, crashing back on the coral.

Rob stood gasping and trembling above him, still wiping mud from his face. Red began to run from the back of Loop's head as he lay weed-messed and inert.

"You tore my dress!" Puppy sobbed bitterly from the car, her childlike hands spreading the torn flounces. "You tore the only purty dress I ever had!"

Rob's hands felt cold as he knelt beside Loop and turned him over. The fair and waving hair was sticky with oozing blood, and the scalp was split to the bone. In the bone of the skull was a chip like that in china. Rob lifted Loop with a mighty effort and staggered across the ditch with him, laying him carefully in the back of the truck. "My dress," Puppy whispered, and her lips were shaking while tears streamed down the softness of her cheeks.

Rob said, "We got to get Loop to the doctor. His head conched on the coral."

Puppy looked at him through a flood of tears. "My birthday, it were, an' you didn't want me to have even the only purty flowers I ever had!"

"Shut up!" Rob said. He ran to Loop's car, backed it off the road and ran back to the truck. His ear was swelling with a dull ache, and his face burned hot from blows but felt cold with anxiety. He got the old truck in gear and they bumped on toward the highway. "Look back and see if Loop's comin' round," Rob said.

Puppy sat hunched and forlorn, wildly sobbing her heart out.

"I'm right sorry about your dress, Puppy," Rob said gently. "But we're in bad trouble. I ain't sure Loop's alive."

"I hope they sends you to the chair!" Puppy said. "You're no good! You're just trouble—trouble—trouble!"

Rob stopped the truck and looked back at Loop. Loop's chest was moving faintly, but he still lay limp and strange-looking. "Puppy, I'll get you another dress somehow, and I am real sorry about your birthday," Rob said, putting a hand on hers. "But this can be bad."

"Last time we went out, what happened?" Puppy wailed. "We had a flat, an' had to get a new tire, an' when we got to Tampa, there wasn't money even for a sandwich; and goin' home, it rained an' I got wet. . . . Today I should have knowed better'n to come with you. You're a wild thing, Rob Tally! A swamp thing like the 'gators! It's bad luck to tetch you!"

Her anguish was so real—and it had been the only really pretty dress she had ever had—that he put his bloody hand on her soft hair and caressed the childlike nape of her neck. "I guess I am bad luck for you! But I sure think a lot o' you, Puppy! An' this can be a case of provin' Loop fell an' I didn't break his head with a rock!"

Suddenly she was sobbing, pressed against his shoulder. "I'm sorry I said I didn't care what happened! I'll tell 'em it weren't your fault. . . . But it were sech a nice day, an' it do git so tiresome just cookin' and washin' and cookin' and washin'. Oh, Rob, I'm real sorry you got hurt, though! . . . It were all Loop's fault an' mine. I shouldn't 'a'wanted to keep the flowers an' candy—but they were so purty!" She looked into the back of the truck. "He's breathin' better."

"Hope he is. An' you should ought to have purty things," Rob said. "Some day you will, Puppy! Some day I'll git 'em for you!" He stopped for the Trail, then swung the truck out and headed for Naples on the Gulf. Half a mile along, a fine car was parked by the canal, and a gray-haired man was fishing. On the back of the car was a plate that had twisted snakes on a staff, and the letters M D each side of it. Rob stopped the truck and jumped out. "Yes, I'm a doctor," the elderly man said before Rob could speak. "And you look as if you could use one. What's the trouble?"

"It ain't me, it's him," Rob said. He told what had happened, while the doctor examined Loop. "He'll be all right—but you're lucky," the doctor said. "Coral and the human skull make a bad combination. . . . My car is faster than yours." His eyes glanced at the ancient truck and Rob's sooted boots. "I'll run him to the hospital. You follow and join me there, and I'll fill out my report."

"He won't die, Mister?" Puppy asked. "It weren't Rob's fault."

The doctor smiled at her. "He won't die. May have to be in the hospital a week or two." His quick eyes looked at her dress. "Was this a party?"

"It were Puppy's birthday," Rob said, touching Puppy's hair. "But I done went an' spoiled it fer her."

The wait at the hospital was very long, and Puppy suffered as people smiled at their mud-draggled appearance, while the day that was to have been wonderful ebbed. Since they did not know what they would have to pay, they dared not even buy a cup of coffee. When the doctor came out, he told them again that Loop would be all right. Rob put his hand in his pocket and asked easily: "What do we owe you, sir?" And she was proud that no one would have known he was worried there might not be enough. But the doctor said: "Nothing. My birthday present to the lady." And Rob reddened with pleasure so his eyes were bright.

As the doctor went, Rob touched Puppy's shoulder tenderly. "Puppy, seeing we still got your birthday money, how about we go on to Tampa an' see a show an' have a nice time still?" She saw that his face was eager and that it was important to him—and somehow important to their lives—that she should go. Her heart ached to him, wanting to drown her vanity and not care what anyone thought. The moment seemed to her of some terrible importance; as if from it two roads reached into all the future: a road with Rob being first and dear, and nothing else mattering: another road that was hard and hurt, but wouldn't be always Puppy without Things. Her lips ached to kiss him and make him always as happy as his eyes, but she said angrily: "I ain't goin' to be a spectacle for no one! I'm goin' home!"

As he set the truck on the way home, she wanted to take his hand and snuggle to his shoulder. But it seemed as if she saw her own hands worn and wrinkled and struggling, caring for little kids that weren't hers, and for little kids that were. Kids, kids, kids. Yet she wanted the great warmth that was in Rob's love. She wanted it so much that she seemed to die without it. And the two roads frightened her.

After they had gone five miles, she put out her hand to his arm, and his own hand came over it quickly, patting with his great young gentleness that hadn't let him be angry with her, even when she had said she hoped they sent him to the chair. "Rob," she whispered, "let's get married! Then I cain't be wishin' wild. I don't know what's the matter with me, Rob!"

"There ain't nothin' the matter. You just ain't had what you ought to had—ever," he said gently, his grave eyes watching the road. "When someone's purty as you, they should ha' purty things. But we cain't git married yet. . . . Don't you think I want to come home an' say: 'There's Puppy in the house! There's my wife to sit opposite me come soup's on! There's my wife to be with me, come the stars come out past the window! There's Puppy an' me forever!' But it cain't be yet. . . . I ain't goin' to take you with the kids an' no room. An' I cain't build us nothin' yet. The kids don't get enough milk as it is. Mildred is wearin' shoes that hurts her. Ma ain't had a new dress for three years. . . . If we loves each other, we got to wait, Puppy!" His hand pressed strong and warm on hers. "I hopes you want to wait, Puppy!" His silence was a question.

She did not answer. They did not speak at Gran'ma's door; and as he went away, she saw his shoulders, sad in the starlight. She wanted to run after him and catch him at the gate. Instead, she ran into the house and fell weeping in her bed.

But to Rob's surprise, Loop did not make open trouble. He was even jocular when they met at the juke joint the afternoon Loop got out of hospital. "Hell! What's a scrap over a dame?" Loop said. He made a few dance steps behind the counter of his juke joint. "I've got a full schedule, anyways! Trouble with me, there's only one of me. I can't go round!" He hit Rob on the back. "Just forget it!" He turned to his cronies. "Trouble with Rob, here, he reckons everyone takes things serious. I bet he even thinks old Loop might hold a grudge. Wouldn't even wonder if he worried about his boat and his girl when he's away!" Loop closed one pale eye. "I wouldn't be surprised, he even thinks his girl comes down here for a bit of fun every time he goes froggin'. . . . Now, he couldn't make a bigger mistake than that!" As Rob went out to the truck, the laughter became a roar.

Rob had kept the air-boat at Fund's for safety. But after he left Loop's, he went to look at it where it was beached between Pete 'Fenokee's boat and those of the other Indians. Fund's never closed, and only the width of the highway separated the boats from Fund's. Across the canal was one of the "Indian Villages" kept for tourists, where on the platforms under the thatched roofs the Indians lay like discarded heaps of brilliant cloth. About the village were rusting cans, the remains of automobiles, small red pigs and beautiful frogging boats. Right now only one young and rather pretty woman was awake, hunting for lice in her child's hair. When she made a capture, she ate the louse—and her face had the satisfaction of work well done. Storms were threatening, and with the exception of the swish of cars on the Trail, it was very still; and when the big rain-drops fell into the dark water they made silver blobs. Rob knew that despite the nearness of Fund's and the Village, there would be times when no one was noticing what happened to the boats.

He was still worrying as Captain Reaves, the owner of the trading schooner drove up. Captain Reaves was withered and white-haired and tiny as a milkweed seed, but he was one of the best skippers in Florida or the West Indies. He said: "I been trying to find you, boy! Want your

old job back on the schooner? We got three months hauling hardwood in Cuba. Sailing from Port Everglades tomorrow mid-morning. You can't come, I'll have to get a man in Cayman."

Rob smiled at him. "There's never anythin' I'd like better'n a trip with you, Cap'n. But I got an air-boat at last, an' I got to make her pay—effen I can keep Loop Huber from burnin' her." He told what had happened. "I don't seriously reckon Loop was doin' more than try to make me uneasy—but he's mean enough to burn her just so he could make it look like accident an' I couldn't prove it wasn't."

"Mean man always has the man that ain't mean," Captain Reaves said. "He knows the man that ain't mean won't hit back unless he's surer than the mean man'll let him be."

"'Fore long I'll have my own hammock. Till then, I'm takin' no chances. That boat ain't goin' to be alone!" Rob said. "I'm fixin' a dolly to pull her right up inter Fund's yard, an' sleepin' in her of nights."

Chapter Six

AFTER Ma had got the little girls off to school that morning—thinking how pretty they looked with their smooth, blonde-white hair and in the new blue dresses and new shoes Rob had bought them—she had put tea and sugar, potato bread and margarine and a fry pan in a paper sack, and had taken her fish-pole and gone into the 'Glades, walking slowly. She had made all the 'rangements for the little girls. Because they were so good and pretty, it had been easy to find real nice people who wanted them—the elderly man had wanted to keep holding Alice's little hand when they'd met, and the gray-haired woman had been sensible, but her eyes like a little girl's with new dolls as she'd knelt beside them.

In Ma herself the pain was getting bad often now, and she was going to tell Rob tonight, and get him to take her to the hospital where they could stop the pain while she waited. She was glad things had gone so well with Rob's boat, for she could ask him to stay with her in Tampa till she had to be doped too much. She was not afraid; but it would be a big joy to have him come in every day while she finished getting ready for the journey that no man knew where it went. She guessed everyone was selfish and wanted to see a face that said: "You'll be missed, my darlings! I'll be wishing it's good, whatever it is after!"

And today life had been good to her in that the pain was nearly quiet, so she could treat herself to the fishing. About her the 'Glades stretched, faded buff, faded brown, dim green, the delicate beginnings of blue to the tremendous sky. Here and there were burned reaches, streaked with brown and black. At the canal where she seated herself under the man-planted Brazilian oaks, the reflection of the bonnet leaves in the water was greener than the leaves, for the reflection showed the leaves from below as the sunlight shone through them. And along the far bank of the canal grew sawgrass, maiden cane, strangler figs and wild papayas. There were spikes of violently blue dog's-tongue flowers and clusters of bearded heliotrope and wild-aster bush leaning its million daisy flowers high into the yellow willows. Her hands were as excited as a girl's to get the plump bits of shrimp tied to the hook; and for all the fish she had caught through all the years, she still couldn't believe as the line entered the brown water that anything so wonderful could happen as there being a tug on it, and the this-way-that-way wrenching of a fish, and the fish's heaviness in the air and a fish on the bank!

She waited as the current talked softly to the line across her rough finger. Then—unbelievably!—a fish had the bait, the whole wonder happened, and a fat bass was on the bank. Her smoke-scented tea at noon was better than all other tea. Fried fish had never been quite as good. Every minute was warm with sun or beautiful with shadow as fish made plops and whirls, and great, soft rains marched across the sea of grass. After she had pulled up her line for the last time, she unrolled it and threw it out again into the water that was shining with the reflections of gold clouds and of willow trunks rosy with sunset, and again life was good to her. She caught a fat, whiskered catfish. Then she walked home through an evening of smoke where the sun was a fierce orange ball hung on a dark, rose-lavender sky. There was still the waiting for the journey—but she had said good-by to her life, and no one could have had a kinder good-by.

She was set to tell Rob, when he said: "I'm sorry to be late, Ma, but I had to start on makin' a dolly for the boat." He explained about Loop. "It's bad, for I'll have to pay Fund three dollars a week to use his yard."

She went to the stove, revamping her plans. The pain was a terror that couldn't be changed, but selfishness could. Turning, she said: "Reckon you could get someone to keep an eye on th' boat this evenin'? I was aimin' to get you to run us up to Tampa. I have to get a bit o' treatment—ain't nothin' to worry about—but I've 'ranged for the girls to stay with good folks whilst I'm there. So you kin run right back."

He said: "I'll get a good Indian t' watch the boat. You're sure it's jist a treatment, Ma?" He set his hands on her shoulders, joking. "Always bein' a bother, you! But nothin' must happen to you!"

She said, "Sure I'm sure!" and smiled.

For once there wasn't an Indian he knew at Fund's or the Village, and there weren't any men to help him carry the boat across the highway to Fund's. But he knew Ma would not have asked to be taken to the hospital unless she felt bad. So he asked Fund to keep an eye on the boat, and hired the Indian girl he'd seen that afternoon, giving her two dollars down to go and sleep in the boat, and promising her two dollars more when he came back. Fund's never closed, and he guessed he was just playing Loop's game by worrying. But he was worrying increasingly as he started back.

Where the Trail began its eastward cut across the peninsula, the pre-dawn mist was over the 'Glades, like white snakes and dropped gauze. Sometimes it was over the highway so you could only tell where the highway was by the vegetation that rose above the curling vapor. Near Fund's it was so thick, he had to keep on the pavement by occasional, watery glimpses of the tops of the Brazilian oaks along the strip between the pavement and the canal. Fund's sign was just a reddish blur on the mist, and the shutters had been closed to keep out the damp—so there wasn't much chance anyone inside would have noticed what was happening outside.

ROB parked on Fund's gravel and crossed the Trail by keeping his own shadow on the mist in front of him. Even so, he hit a tree. Feeling from tree to tree, his hands found the tree with the little hollow in it that was opposite his boat. He slid foot-by-foot down the bank and was in water without touching his boat. He moved along the bank to the left and struck metal. His torch, held close, showed Pete 'Fenokee's boat. He moved along the bank to the right, and found Greek Lou's boat. His own boat wasn't there. Everyone in Fund's was drunk and hadn't noticed anything. The Indian girl wasn't in the Village and he guessed she'd gone right to Miami to spend his two dollars. When dawn melted the mist, he found the boat, burned, half a mile down the canal. With Ma sick and might need money, there wasn't time for grievin' or hate or Loop. Frogs weren't plentiful enough now to reckon on the chance of being able to buy another boat from Fund on time and still take care of Ma. By driving hard, he

could just make it to Port Everglades in time to take up Captain Reaves' offer. . . .

They were loading hardwood off West Cuba when he learned that Ma was dead. She had asked that he be not told until after her funeral, so he wouldn't feel rushed to go to it. The little girls were safely 'dopted.

Shrimp was torn two ways. In her opinion Puppy was a softy and a sook and in no way fitten for Rob. There was also the golden dream that if Puppy's conduct was outrageous enough, Rob might realize this at about the time Shrimp had become very beautiful and at least a sudden fourteen. On the other hand, Puppy was Rob's property, and all Shrimp's loyalty dictated that she care for Rob's property while he was absent. She had seen Rob go away on the night of Puppy's birthday, and the droop of his shoulders had hurt her chest so that she had wanted to run after him and say that his truck was better than all other cars and that to build a fire by a canal and grill fish was better than any store-bought eating place. She had wanted to put her childish arms tight round his shoulders and take away the pain that made them droop. But only Puppy could have done that.

It was incomprehensible, but Rob wanted Puppy. And seeing Loop's car coming through the afternoon gold from the highway, Shrimp moved to the middle of the road, planted her feet apart and waited. Loop was coming so fast that she was frightened, but her love for Rob kept her in the road. Loop braked so that gravel flew from under the dragging tires, and even then she had to jump back and dart round ahead of the car again as it stopped. Loop's fair hair was shining. He said: "Trying to get yourself run over?" Shrimp said nothing. She simply stood. Loop jumped out. "If this is your idea of a game, get another one!"

Shrimp was shaking, but she said: "You keep away from here, an' keep away from Puppy!"

Loop laughed. "Rob's little watchdog, eh?"

She nodded fiercely. Loop reached for her, and Shrimp scrabbled in her oversized blue pants, almost losing them, and pulled out her father's old revolver, holding it with both hands and leveling it at Loop's chest. Loop stared at her. "You wouldn't dare!"

"That's what you think!" Shrimp said, and her voice ran up and down. "Now you git back in your car, Loop Huber! An' don't you try to run over me when you do, for I'll shoot at you goin' past—an' I may miss up with you—an' I may not!"

They looked at each other, and Loop said slowly: "You're just crazy enough!" And he got into the car and backed off.

"Run, Loop! Run fer laughin' at her because she thought you'd marry her.

PUPPY was suffering, and resented suffering. She told herself that she was done with Rob and his swamp. But she kept listening for Rob's step; even now that she knew that Rob was away for three months—that, to Puppy, were longer than eternity—she kept listening. If Rob came, she would fight with him, but if she heard a car down across the 'Glades, her heart jumped because she might see him in the door. Because Rob made her suffer, she was cruel to him; so that she had not even written him she was sorry about his ma. That would hurt him, and she wanted to hurt him, but it hurt in her too. To forget it, she was trying a new way of doing her hair—caught backward and tied in a rich cluster on her neck so that it showed the curved beauty of her jaw where it met the round column of her neck. It made her gasp, for it changed her from purty to beautiful!

Her exasperation was that she could not see it properly in the broken scrap of hand mirror, and the blotted wall mirror that hung above the calendar. She did know it was so beautiful that it should be seen. Trying to see, she felt herself a treasury; her hair pouring over her fingers was life, her body, warmth and joy and secret smoothness

Scared of the swamp, ain't you; there's panther here, snakes, and 'gators."

of ivory and rose. It wasn't right to be so much and have so little! She let her head droop backward, and her own throat line, in the poor mirror, made her heart pound.

Gran, sewing patches, said: "The beans are burnin', Puppy."

Puppy went to the stove, and the beans she should have been turning until they fried golden crisp, had hard, scorched patches on them. "You have to keep watchin' them so they brown and meal right," Gran said helpfully.

"I hate beans if they're brown or they ain't. I'm sick of beans, beans, beans!" Puppy said. "I'm sick of bein' told, told, told!"

When she glimpsed Gran, two tears were running down the seaming of Gran's face below her spectacles and Gran's fingers were missing their stitch. It was worse than if Gran had scolded at her for bein' mean! And even the car she'd thought she'd heard away across the 'Glades hadn't come. . . . If it had just come, no matter who was in it, she could have gone out smiling and spoken to someone—and that would have been something to make the day. She just wanted people she could smile at to see her. She just wanted a mirror to see herself she could smile in! It was too much that she couldn't see—too much the car hadn't come. Her face got hotter than from the heat of the stove and her heart began to beat with mounting excitement. When Gran and Shrimp were asleep, she would go to Loop's.

She went suddenly to Gran's chair and dropped on her knees with her arms round Gran. "I didn't mean to speak sharp! I'm real sorry I burnt the beans!" She patted the tears off Gran's face with a flour-bag handkerchief and kissed Gran's cheek. "I wish't I weren't so mean!"

"You ain't mean," Gran said. "You're just young. It's very hard to be young, for it seems like everythin' ought to be easy. . . . And nothin' ever is. Nothin' in th' world ever is."

Chapter Seven

LOOP let her use a tourist cabin where there was hot water and mirrors. Loop took her to Tampa dancing, and what she saw in windows, Loop bought her. She had silk clothes and a white chenille wrap and things went so fast and all to music from the juke box or the radio or Loop's guitar, that she didn't have to think except about the next thing that was fun, when everything was fun. She told Gran and Shrimp she had a job at Mrs. Wheaton's sandwich place. Loop said he loved her. He said they'd get married. She didn't feel wicked or cheap or anything but music that made her feet dance. Two months after Rob had left, she was running through the dark from the tourist cabin to the juke joint when she saw the new blonde girl at the counter. Loop was talking with the blonde girl when Loop caught sight of Puppy. He whispered quick to her and said something to the fellows. The laugh was still on their faces as Puppy stood at the door. In the moment all the silk things and music things she'd been holding round her fell from her. It was as if she was naked for them to laugh at her. She knew as she guessed she'd always known, Loop wouldn't marry her. She said: "I just come to tell you I'm goin' home, Loop." She smiled brightly and shrugged. "I guess I'm just the type what gets tired o' places." She smiled more brightly still at the girl and went out.

Loop called: "Shucks now, baby! Don't be mad!" But she knew he winked at the fellows and the girl. And he did not follow her. . . .

When Rob came back he did not mean to go to see Puppy, but the hunger just to look at her took him under the spread stars to the Caldwell cabin. Puppy was working over the stove and the yellow light beat up on her face and the heat had turned her cheeks red. She said, "Hello,

Rob. Shrimp and Gran are flare-fishin'." And her voice was quieter than he had ever heard it.

He moved to her and said: "Hello, Puppy." And it seemed to him that a great wave of wonder passed between them just because they were in the world together and near each other. She continued to stir the pot of beans for tomorrow. Suddenly, she threw down the spoon and ran out of the room. He was frightened and followed her to the door of her room. It was unlatched but empty, for she had gone outside. He called, "What is it, Puppy, darlin'?"

She did not answer. Because food could not be wasted, he strode back to the stove and pulled the beans aside where they would not burn. Then he followed her into the coolness of the night and saw her sitting where the canal cut through to the bay. He sat down at her side.

"What is it?"

She said, very low, "Don't talk to me!"

"You cain't scare me thisaway!" he said softly. "Did you miss me, Puppy darlin'? Effen you did, I got good news. With th' shares from Cap'n Reaves we goin' t' have enough for th' hammock, an' move th' old house there." He pressed her hand. "We can git married, effen you want to, Puppy."

Puppy gazed steadily before her as she said: "We cain't get married."

"You ain' happy here. An' from now on it's goin' to be easier with the little ones provided fer."

"I wouldn't care so now about the easy part." She put her hand on his. "Effen we could just be back where I could work for you an' you love me, I wouldn't care! . . . When you went away, it were as if there were two roads an' I took the one that went where it didn't matter where it went—because you wasn't on it! But it was like as if I couldn't go back. I didn't even write you when your ma died."

He touched his fingers on her hand. "We does a lot o' things we don't mean when we're angry. I knew why you was angry at me. You wanted purty things." He closed his hand tight on hers. "That weren't wrong fer a purty girl."

"I guess you got to know what's purtiest! . . . It's purty to have someone think you're purty an' good an' like the swamp lilies!"

"You are! To me, you're plumb purty an' everythin' that's nice like th' wild roses when they's all a mat together so they pushes each other! . . . I know why you fought at me, Puppy. I always knowed."

"Tell me what you thought o' me, Rob—tell me everythin' you thought!"

He laughed. "I thought: 'That's the plumb purtiest little girl I ever seen!' I thought: 'That's the girl I wants to come home to—the girl that when froggin' is good, I want to think: That'll buy a new dress fer her! For she's my girl as likes purty things because she's all purty!' . . . I thought: 'Effen it wouldn't shorten time, I'd near like to be old, fer that's goin' to be purtiest old woman with white hair as likes to laugh an' be happy an' have other people happy, so when I'm old, I'm goin' to be right proud of her an' say: "We've been through hard times an' good, an' if there's anythin' afterwards, I wants her to be right there fer us to take up again! Fer I bet if the people as thinks there are angels are right, she'll be th' purtiest angel!' I thought: 'I hope when time comes, she goes first so she won't be lonely—for she needs takin' care of! An' I wouldn't ever want her lonely.' "

"Tell me, Rob!"

"I thought: 'That's my girl.' I guess that's about all there is to think."

"I guess I did need takin' care of . . . I guess takin' care of is the best there is. I guess I been thinkin': 'I could of cooked his beans an' put in peppers an' tomato an' garlic an' cooked them mealy, then fried them up a bit.' I guess I been thinkin': 'Times there was a bit extra from th' house money, I could've bought him a shirt!' Or I could've fixed up a barrel fer a chair fer him. I could've gone with him in the boat, like Shrimp would, an' helped with the frogs. It could've been hard, but it could've been us!"

"Why you talkin' like that, darlin'? Puppy, you ain't ill?" Panic was in his deep voice.

"I ain't ill, except I always been ill in my head, I reckon! An' I reckon I wouldn't have been like that workin' beside you an' not carin' like Shrimp would. I reckon that's only how I'd like to of been."

"Effen it's lovin' you want, no one couldn't love you more than I do, you little Puppy, you!"

"You do, Rob?"

"I sure does!" he said. "Effen you wants to marry me, nothin' could be as purely precious to me as you, Puppy! Nothin'!"

She leaned into the warmth of his arms, feeling their strength and their tenderness. "I ain't much, Rob. I wanted to be, but always bein' what I wanted to be slipped through my fingers, like. Shrimp's right, Shrimp's what she wants to be—an' nothin' stops her!" She pressed closer. "Hold me a minute like I was everything you says! Hold me! Hold me!"

"It's what I like best to do," he said softly.

She became suddenly urgent. "Tell me what it'd be like effen we got married? I want to hear!"

Feeling her beside him and thinking of how it would be, he was shaken by a wave of emotion that seemed great as the great sky. He was not a prayin' man, but if wishin' would do, it would be that he would be good to her. He would be gentle to her. He would remember the trust of it that she was with him. Putting his hand over her hand, he said gravely: "Effen you marry me, Puppy, you won't never regret it effen I kin help it! It won't be that I has rights an' you has duties. I won't never come to you drunk, nor fright you. When you're with me, I want it to be that you say: 'This is safest in all the world. This is safe, for I'm with Rob!' "

"I *would* be safe with you, Rob! I'd say: 'Because he's stronger'n me, it ain't no cause to fear. Because he's stronger'n me, just makes bein' in his arms the safest place there are!' "

"I'd try to make it that, Puppy. I'd want you to be safe an' happy—not skeered, like some women's eyes look come bedtime."

"Rob. . . . You can have me now effen you want it!" She put up her rounded and childlike face, her lips parted in the starlight. Stooping his face to hers, he kissed her hard and briefly on the mouth. And for the first time she was answering him so that their minds trod the same path through the lilies, under the running clouds. Then he put her from him by the shoulders.

"No. Effen I said yes, you couldn't help but be a little bit afeared. You couldn't help but wonder a mite what I thought an' what might happen, an' effen anythin' could happen before we was churched! . . . I want you to be all happy an' no fear an' no wondering! I wants to bring you only good, Puppy. I wants us never to bring each other naught but good."

They sat together, his left hand over her right hand against the grass. After a while, she leaned her head on his shoulder against his cheek, rubbing it softly with the softness of her hair. Reaching to put his hand about her face, he said: "Don't think I don't thank you for what you said. I loves you, Puppy. I never loved you like I loves you now." There was such tenderness between them that it seemed there could never be loneliness in the world again.

Presently she asked: "Rob, would you like to show me your hammock tomorrer?"

His voice showed his pleasure. "Effen you like. I thought you'd sooner go to Tampa—"

"Let's go to the hammock! . . . Rob, promise you won't have no

trouble with Loop! Don't even go a-near Loop before we go to the hammock!"

His voice grew hard. "I still aim Loop's goin' to pay for th' boat when I get to it. An' I got to figure some way he's got to learn to let us be—but I won't do nothin' foolish."

"Rob, don't even go a-near him till we been to the hammock! Promise!" Her voice was so urgent he laughed tenderly.

"All right, I won't go a-near till we been! Stop worritin'!"

Hot weather had come back late that year and produced a sort of false spring, so that the cypress swamp was a miracle of green and blue and tender-feathered branches as Rob poled through it, taking Puppy to the hammock. Even the Spanish moss was fresh and new with silvery green; and everywhere were blossoms and the tiny scent of wild roses. It was, Rob thought, as if a man was in a decorated palace. Everywhere you looked, something had been done to make it purtier. And when they left the true swamp through the moonflower tangles and came into the lower 'Glades, the 'Glades were laughing too with sharp light, and instead of being heavy with purple threat of storm, the cloud-shadows were lilac and silver across the distances, and the water was all little bright waves. On the stalks of the maiden cane, the dragonflies were courting and the kingfishers chased each other down the waterways. He picked all sorts of flowers for Puppy, and she dabbled her hands in the water.

When they reached the big hammock, he tied the boat to the white mangroves, helped Puppy out, and they made their way up through strangler figs and ferns into the hushed jungle, and then to the clear place where the old fire had burned out the hammock heart so it was a wild meadow. Here they sat on a log, and about them were ferns and orchids. He said: "I reckoned to build the house about here."

She looked about. "The truck garden could go back there an' the flower garden here."

"You won't be too lonely here, Puppy?" he asked, hoping she might love it as he loved it.

"All day I'll be sayin': 'Rob'll be home come evenin'!' That's all the company I'll ask." He could not believe her sweetness.

As the radiant day wore on, little patches of cirrus—so high that they were like the fleece of a tiny lamb—began to appear in the infinite blue. And Rob said: "Looks like could be a hurricane throwin' them up somewheres."

She could not believe that such tiny beautiful clouds could mean hurricane—or that the day itself would end. It was only when they turned homeward that the terror came back to her. The day was over. Rob would see Loop and find out. There was no way in the world she could stop him finding out. Her hands went cold, and her face got so hot it hurt. When Rob helped her out of the boat at Grandma's, she could hardly stand. She knew only that she could not look at Rob's face as it would be after he found out.

Chapter Eight

LOOP was behind the counter of the juke joint. He was whistling, and occasionally he made a dance step as he moved the equipment on the counter. He'd grown fatter the last three months. Rob walked in and round the counter so that he was between Loop and the locker where Loop kept the gun. Loop's professional smile stayed stiff on his mouth. He said: "Well! Look who's here!" But the glance of his pale eyes jumped to the back door. Rob walked up to him, resting a hand on his sheath knife. And Loop put his hand on the double skillet.

"What's new?" Loop said.

Rob said: "Puppy's daid." And Loop's face went pale as his bleached hair. Rob spoke softly. "She drowned herself. She must 'a'been real frightened when she done it. She was afeared of water."

Loop's mouth shook so that his full lips made a sound. "Too bad."

"Life's been right fine fer you, Loop," Rob said. "You've gone a-dancin' an' a-winking an' a-laughin' fer your own cleverness an' bein' mean when you could get away with it, an' tormentin' what couldn't hit back. But dancin' an' winkin' an' laughin' is done fer you, Loop. Livin' is done. I'm goin' to kill you—an' you nor no one else cain't stop me. But I ain't goin' to kill you quick or with a gun or this knife. I'm goin' to make you afeared. When I get tired of you bein' afeared, I'm goin' to drownd you like Puppy drowned. Fer you, I'm endin'. There's sech hate in me, I could break you in my hands."

Loop backed from him, ridiculously holding the double skillet, out through the back door, to dodge into the white mangrove by the canal, with Rob just behind him, holding the knife. He was trying to get to the shed where there were other guns. Rob kept between him and the shed—and Loop was getting rattled; backing, he almost fell—suddenly he turned and was running. He moved fast, but with the somewhat shaking run of a big and powerful man gone soft. Rob followed him lightly and headed him off from the highway, but let him get ahead enough to keep him running. Loop splashed across the little canal and climbed out through the water hyacinths so that he was wet and his silk shirt stuck to his body. Then he was looking over his shoulder, running through the lilies and the short ferns. Rob let him gain, so that Loop's face showed the confidence of gaining; he simply kept heading him off from any return to the canal or the highway.

Running was hard on Loop. His fancy tennis shoes would soon cut to bits on the coral jags. When Loop dodged into the dwarf cypress, Rob dropped into the reeds and worked round so that he came level with Loop, who was looking back to where he thought Rob was. Rob felt a certain impersonal pride in his own feet that could move as softly as a cat's. He was so close that he saw Loop's heaving shoulders and the sweat standing on his fair-complexioned forehead. Loop was panting and peering.

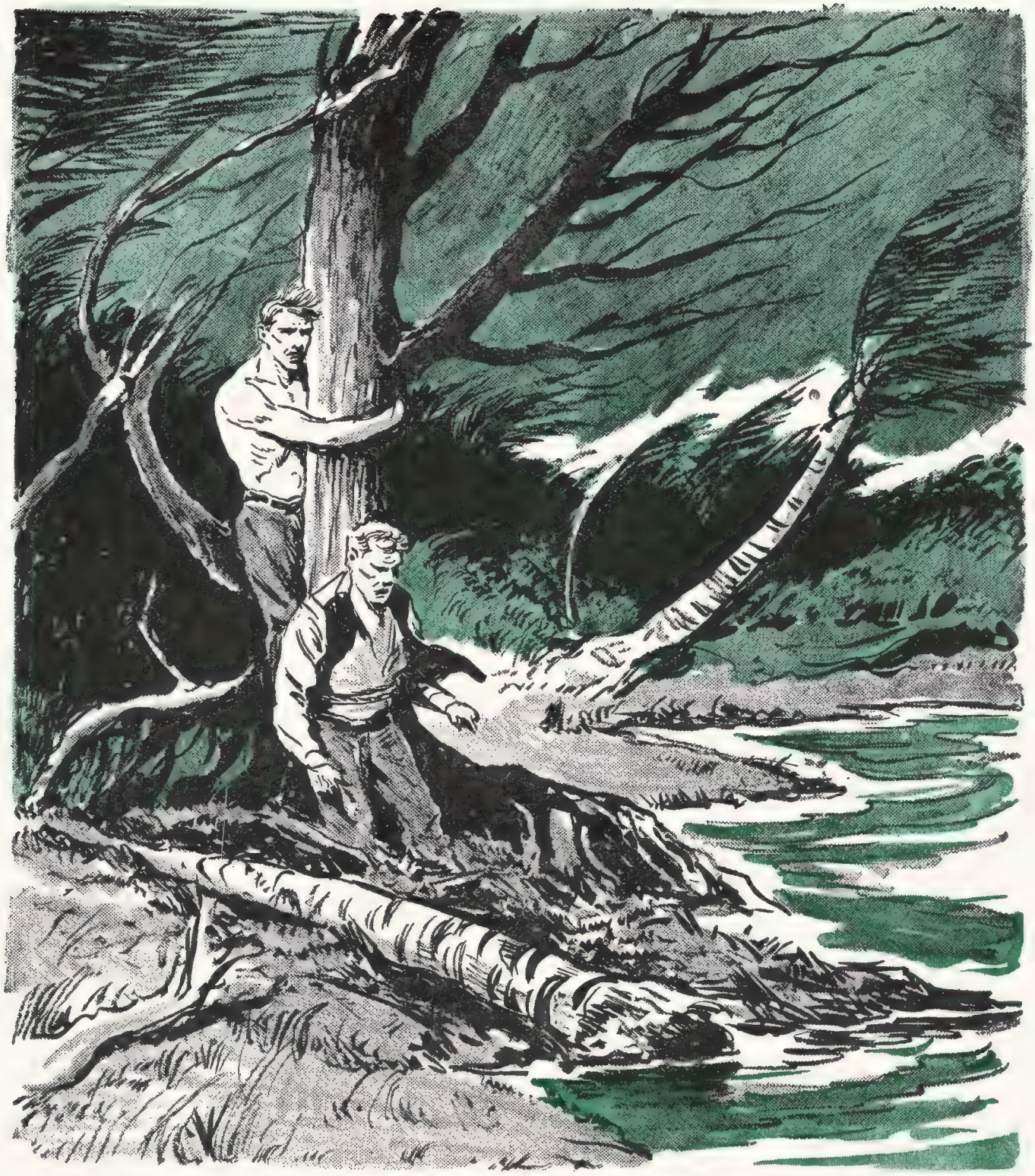
Rob spoke from beside him: "Run, fat man! Run for showin' her pretty things she wanted what she couldn't get! Run for makin' her drunk with a good car folks wouldn't laugh at! She were purty, an' she should've had purty things an'a car to match her."

Loop's face twisted, and he ran—deeper into the swamp. He was afraid, but he still did not believe in the reality of death. Rob guessed very vain men couldn't quite believe death. He looked forward to seeing Loop come to believe it. Meantime it was easy to herd him as it had been for Loop and his friends to herd a frightened deer when they had murdered deer with fire and flashlights.

Presently they were into bigger cypress and the deeper water. Loop climbed and fell and ran, gasping now. Rob followed him lightly, letting him keep his lead. "Run, Loop! Run fer takin' her to where she could eat purty things. Run fer laughin' at her because she thought you'd marry her. Run fer tellin' everyone she were funny!" Loop struggled over the cypress roots and floundered in the pools, and shouted as a harmless snake slithered almost across his splashing body.

"Run!" Rob said.

By night they were moving at a snail's pace in the big trees. "Keep crawlin', Loop! Keep crawlin'! Everythin' 's a joke! Everythin' 's fun! It's a shame, ain't it, there ain't more o' you—'cause there ain't enough o' just one o' you to go round with the girls you gits. . . . Scared of the swamp, ain't you, Loop? Not likely they'll hurt you. But there's panther here. There's snakes. This



"It's good we only had a breeze," the Sheriff croaked with irony. "I'd have hated to see a wind."

time you ain't in a flash boat with flash friends to shoot everythin' that moves an' leave it wounded-of. This time you're on the ground, an' there's 'gators an' maybe a croc'—an' always there's me to ketch up with you when you goes to sleep.

"Don't think you can slip away when dark comes. I lived with Pete, you likes to call Chief Turnip-Top, an' the other Indians you likes to tease. So I can hear a mouse move at night. . . . Presently I'm goin' to kill you. But you don't know when. It's goin' to be bad when I gets astride you and puts your head down in the water. . . . You'll *try* not to breathe, an' your lungs'll swell an' get like they is full o' fire—an' all at once, they gulps, an' the water is worse than the fire, an' your eyes'll burst in your head an' everythin' will be red and fire-color—an' then black—an' you'll know: *This is the end! This is the finish o' everythin' bein' fun an' there not bein' enough o' me, an' it bein' funny she thought I'd marry her!* You'll know, *Nex' secon' I'll be a fat hunk o' meat, an' beetles'll be in my fair hair an' water lice'll run in my fat mouth, an' the ants'll come, an' the buzzards hoppin' around.*"

Loop was wobbling, and he leaned against a tree. His mouth panted: "Cut it out. . . . Listen! I got three thousand dollars in the bank. It's

yours, Rob! I'll make a check! You can take it to the bank. It'll buy the land you've wanted. . . ." He slipped to the foot of the tree. "Listen! Three thousand dollars—"

"Three thousand dollars would have been mighty good while Ma was alive an' Puppy was alive. I might have made it fer myself effen you hadn't burned my boat. Ma might still be alive; she could have had good doctors. Puppy might still be pretty—not drowned—effen I had had my house sooner. She might be laughin' when she got a box of sweets effen you hadn't burned the boat. . . . Now I haven't no partick'ler use fer three thousand dollars. Now I only got use fer your head under water, an' feelin' your heart burstin' between my thighs like a deer's heart bursts when you run it so it falls in the water an' cain't get up."

"You'll go to the chair!"

"Wouldn't make no difference fer you. But I don't aim to."

Loop was running again. And it was getting dark, so the cypress trees were dark against the lilac sky. The birds were settling, and the night things were waking. "Run!" He was following Loop closer now. He could see Loop's teeth and eyes. Hurricane-carrying tornadoes had once passed here. The cypress trees that nothing moved had fallen twisted, and where they formed an angle of trunks, Loop ran in and holed-up with his back to the forked angle. Rob sat down before him. The stars came out little and high between the cypresses, so you could still see a bit. The swamp was full of splashing, and a bull 'gator roared so the swamp rang. Loop pressed back panting against the trunks, his arms spread, fear and hate in his face. His fury was the fury of a thing that had never suffered and now was being made to suffer.

"You damned cheap fool out of the swamps, I'm not responsible for it if your cheap little tramp threw herself at me!" Rage at his scratched face, his soft, cut feet, his exhaustion were in him, and he jumped. Their bodies met between logs and water.

"She were foolish," Rob said. "But she were not seventeen, an' she were purty as a rose, and now I'm a-goin' to kill you!"

They closed as hate closes, hard and not hard enough. Heavy and not heavy enough. Rob's fingers pressed Loop's throat, but could not go deep as hate went. They rolled together as shoulders hurt shoulders, chest bruised against the rib-hard heaving of chest, their arms bruised their back muscles. Twisting up, they were like something that grew together. And forcing his head in, Loop sank his teeth in Rob's neck—as pain through rage—and his heavy short teeth felt for the jugular vein. Rob threw them both off their feet and backward so that they rolled into the water. As Loop's head went under, his teeth let go.

They fought like fish in the water, or like fighting 'gators; thrashing, rolling, plunging, each trying to drown the other, legs locking round legs, clenched arms grasping submerged heads, so that they almost drowned together.

Then Rob was on top, astride Loop's heavy, soft and slippery body, one arm locked on Loop's throat, one arm holding the fair, waved hair. Slowly he forced Loop's head under water, and his legs locked round Loop's chest while his heels, dug into Loop's belly, felt the bursting thunder of Loop's heart. Forcing the head down, he whispered: "This is for Ma as died by herself 'cause I had to be away. This is fer Puppy." There was a great convulsion and a choking explosion in Loop's body; a twitching and a turning and a racked tearing of choking—and the big body went limp so that as Rob flung it from him, it still drifted face downward, unmoving. . . .

Rob crawled onto the muddy bank and lay with his face against his arm while his chest gasped for breath. "It don't take away your bein' afeared or the hurt, Puppy," he said. "But Loop won't laugh no more!"

An hour later, he walked into the Sheriff's office.

"I kilt Loop," he said. "What fer is my business. I'm tellin' you because I don't want no one else t' get blamed by mistake effen he's found an' I'm not around. Now I'm agoin', an' effen you shoots to stop me, or not, is up to you."

Chapter Nine

NOW in the hurricane-driven boat, rain washed down the Sheriff's face in sheets. He wondered why he did not go back. Duty? Pride? Anger? The determination not to let the man in the boat ahead smile at him? All, perhaps. . . . With bitterness he knew that if he had not been easy with Rob Tally, he need never have let Rob walk out of his office, or later make that dash for the boats at the unattended dock in the estuary. That the boat into which the Sheriff had jumped to follow him was fast enough to follow him but not fast enough to overtake him was simply an unpleasant joke of chance. That Rob had nothing to say in his own defense—so that the only presumption was that there had been nothing to say—and yet that the Sheriff had known and liked him for years was a grimmer joke still.

Scud whistled against the sails. The Sheriff struggled with his wet pipe. If he had been a family man, he might have gone back. But he wasn't married, and he was proud of his record of never losing a man. Chance had put him in this ridiculous race toward death, in boats that by chance were evenly matched, and for reasons he could not work out, he could not give up the race! And the weather was worse, the great flight of the clouds a more dizzying thing. Both boats were running under reefed sails, and what canvas they carried would not last long. The chase had now resolved itself into whose sails ripped out first.

The Sheriff's did. And the boat went broadside to the wind and heeled over—with scud flying from the upper gunnel and water lapping horridly over the lower. The Sheriff threw out the improvised sea-anchor he had prepared for the contingency—and as the anchor tautened the rope, the boat slowly righted and for a moment rode steady to the blast. Then the rope parted, the boat went broadside again on the face of a climbing wave, and the Sheriff was calmly sorry that he would not see his town again, or again go fishing down the long waterways of the 'Glades under the shadow of the clouds. He also had a moment to worry about his dog. Then the descending boom hit him on the shoulder and glanced across his shoulder to strike the side of his head. . . .

He came to in the bottom of the boat over which white scud was racing. Above him crouched two dungaree-clad legs. Above the legs rose the beauty of a brown torso and one great brown arm was holding to the gunnel while another brown arm moved as its hand wound a bandage round the Sheriff's head. Dark eyes, heavily lashed, looked down into his with grim mockery. The Sheriff said: "The mast is the wrong color." The long-lashed eyes smiled briefly. "Ain't in your old boat, Sher'ff."

The Sheriff struggled, and Rob's hand pushed him down. "Don't want to go swimmin' again, do you?"

The Sheriff felt his jaw. Rob's voice said, "It ain't broken," and added: "Arm is." Water flew over them in sheets. Whether it was seawater or rain the Sheriff did not know. The boat rode beautifully into the wind, cushioning smoothly on the weighted rope to its sea-anchor. The Sheriff said: "Thanks." After some time, he asked: "How did you do it?"

The dark eyes were remote. " 'Glades people don't aim to go boatin' only on calm days, Sher'ff." His mouth smiled for the first time. "I seen you go over. Seemed like you wasn't comin' up again—so I come back an' got you with the boathook."

They regarded each other, and the Sheriff smiled weakly. On one of Rob's lean hips was a bulge where the Sheriff's gun was holstered inside Rob's trousers. After several more moments the Sheriff asked: "How long do we keep afloat?"

"That's sort o' hard to say. You hurtin' bad?"

The Sheriff stirred exploratorily and grimaced. "I've been more comfortable."

A sea broke over them, and Rob bailed. Before he had gained on the sloshing flood, another foaming crest was on them. The Sheriff managed to sit up—and the wind tore at his hair and hurt his nostrils and ears. He shouted: "Give me a can!" They fought the water, and always the seas came faster as the howling spray became an agony on the flesh. At intervals Rob worked his way forward and adjusted the bridle of the sea-anchor, in part controlling their drift.

"RECKON Beetle Key oughta be somewheres astern of us," he announced, resuming the steady swing of his bailing. "Effen the sea ain't clear over it."

Through the shriek of wind and the strange cry of the sea was now an endless rumble that came from all horizons, from the sky above and seemingly from the sea below and from the shaken earth below the floor of the sea. It was a sound deep as thunder but more rapid than thunder, like all the freight trains of all the world, yet so vast that all the freight trains of the world would be puny beside it. It was the true and most frightening sound of hurricane.

"Sort—o' the question—o' how long now!" Rob said, coughing from the spray; and the Sheriff knew what he said only by reading his lips. The Sheriff knew that it would not be long. He was astounded that it had been as long as it had been. Only a man born to the way of water could have kept the boat afloat up to now. Additionally, they were drowning so that they choked with every breath, for sea and sky were mixing in a crying gray fog. Then suddenly, in the flying mist astern, the black and twisted shapes of mangroves showed, lashed by foaming surf, bending like watery grass in a world of driving water. "Beetle Key, Rob said colmly. The boat tottered up a crest, descended awkwardly, stern-first into a valley of water, rose higher yet and came down like an elevator amongst treetops, tilted sideward and wedged momentarily between two trunks.

The Sheriff fell out and was sucked downward into the mass of root and branches. Then water was boiling up again, and he felt Rob's hand grab the back of his collar. The boat stuck where it was, but the Sheriff and the man he had followed went inland amongst boiling foam, feet-thick masses of trash and broken boards. "Oughta be—some—right big—mangrove—adown water!" gasped Rob. "Reckon thar's one yonder!"

But what they had fallen into was not water. It was a rolling, churning, thrusting barricade of wreckage; the temporarily collected loot of the Straits of Florida. Blankets of turtle-grass mixed with blankets of foam, that lifted and flew down the wind, trails of entangling kelp as thick as a man's wrist looped like rubber ropes through fragments of weathered packing cases, splintered boards and astonished shellfish which appeared and disappeared again slimily. Over and through the toppling masses, water boiled, sucked and surged, and from and over the water drove a stinging mist of water mixed with air, just breathable enough to prolong the agony of attempting to breathe. Visibility was reduced to a few yards of howling and whistling vapor. Driving sheets of wet sand stung like abrasives blown from a gun. Now the Sheriff and the man who held him were on top of the seething masses; now they were buried under a toppling cascade of sticks, seaweed and foam. And each time they went down, the Sheriff knew the trapped horror of believing that they could not reach the air again, of thinking: *This is death.* And each time as he scrabbled with one-armed futility, the great muscles of the man beside him pulled him up again.

The Sheriff was as fond of life as the next man, and he was not a man to give up lightly, but he knew an impossibility when he saw it. As they struggled to the quaking surface for the fourth time, he yelled: "Let—go—of—me! We can't—make it!"

The wild thing whose face was bleeding and down whose forehead the dark hair thrashed, then tugged in the fury of the wind, laughed back at him. "Reckon we can. The big mangrove ain't fur off now."

A blast such as they had not yet experienced momentarily flattened the marine quagmire and agonized the ears and throat by its air pressure. Under it, the Sheriff lost the sense of personal identity. He was wounded life, grateful to impersonal strength that was the man that sought to save him. And through the blast the man tugged steadily toward the tree they could no longer see, and of whose location the Sheriff was no longer sure. A sideward rolling log wallowed in from the sea. The man thrust the Sheriff down into the maelstrom and sank beside him—and the log rolled and blundered over them. Then they fetched up scrapingly against the great mangrove that was shuddering under the impact of tide and wind. The man twisted a length of rope round the Sheriff's body, holding him in the fork of the tree, then climbed far up the bending trunk, locked his own legs about one of the branches and began carefully to cut off the treetop. It seemed he had hardly nicked the wood before the tree broke with a report like a small cannon, and the leafy head was swirling away with wind and surf.

Even with its leafy head gone, their perch trembled as a bent bow or as a wharf-piling does in a flood. The tide drew at their knees. Surf flew over them chokingly and each wave seemed higher. For the first time, the Sheriff thought lovingly of the tenacity of mangrove roots. They could breathe only by pressing their lips to the trunk and sheltering their mouths with their hands, and twice they were forced to move higher up the shorn giant. And still the water rose steadily until they must breathe as the valley of a swell sucked past, then hold their breath and cling madly to the tree as the next crest rushed over them. Wind and driving rubbish almost stripped them. Night came, and the only light was the racing snow of the swells and the pallid ghosts of flying spindrift.

But finally there was lessening of the wind. It was still a great gale, but the force that is impossible of belief for those who have not experienced it was no longer there. Life contended merely with mighty wind and marching seas, not with disintegration. This was a wind possible to the northern world, not the suddenly flaming madness of the tropics.

Slowly the sea dropped through the flying rain. "We ain't goin' to get center," Rob croaked hoarsely. "Center must've passed considerable to the east o' us." The hard smile touched his bruised mouth. "Round the center might've been bad."

"It's sure good we only had a breeze," the Sheriff croaked with irony. "I'd have hated to see a wind!"

WITH drowned dawn, a great rain was driving across the emerging key, from which the boat was gone. They descended the tree and fell at full stretch upon the seaweed blankets. The Sheriff's head was on a branch, but after long consideration he decided that the branch was better than the effort of moving his head. Once he was wakened by getting his mouth against the turtle-grass, and suffocation compelled him to move his head sideward. During the anguish of the move, he noted with surprise that black night had returned. When he woke again, drenched rose of softly raining dawn was about them.

Twenty feet away, Rob was asleep on his back, dark-lashed, helplessly relaxed, and suggesting some drowned merman flung up by the storm. After agony, the Sheriff sat up. With great suffering, he got to his knees and crawled inch by inch toward the sleeper.

As he crawled, he felt a new pain that was not physical, for if the weather of the oceans sank to calm, the first great emotional storm of a simple and honest life was twisting within the Sheriff. Always he had done his duty and obeyed and upheld the law; disregarding personal safety, crooked politicians, the tug of personal friendships. It had never occurred to him that he might tangle with a problem that the simplicity of the law did not fully answer. He had believed unquestioningly that the wrongs of the world were due to violations of the law, but crawling to enforce the law, he had no glow of being right. . . . Instead, he saw sharply changing pictures as if from a disordered cinema—of Rob, working doggedly in the mills by day and the swamps by night, almost as much a part of the 'Glades as were the Indians, and proud as an Indian; of a silly kid of a girl, beautiful as the unexpected flowering of the 'Glades when the orchid-massing of the hyacinths made a man think he could not see what he saw; of Loop and Loop's friends riding in a flashy car while an old tomcat, head high and buzzing with pride like a swarm of bees, carried home a rat—and of the car swerving to strike him. The law didn't set much store by a cat. But because he was confused by hurricane, the Sheriff found himself wondering if God ever wondered about the law. He wasn't God, however, but a sworn law-man, and he kept crawling noiselessly.

Only when his hand was within an inch of the gun did he move fast. Then his hand darted, unclipped the holster flap, clenched on the gunstock and leveled the gun as he collapsed backward upon his abrased buttocks.

Rob's eyes had opened, and he sat up, slowly but still gracefully. Regarding the gun in the Sheriff's hand, he said: "Reckon I overslept."

He drew up his knees, closed his arms lightly about them and regarded the sea across which the dark and rosy light was turning to watery steel. "What you aim to do?" Rob asked, not taking his gaze from the surf.

The Sheriff cleared his throat. "Why did you do it?"

"A man don't kill but fer reason close to him. What comes close, stays his business—come what do."

"Not from my side of the fence!" the Sheriff said with heat. "You try on my shoes! . . . You killed a man. He wasn't any good, but you can't go about killing men just because they aren't any good, or we'd have a bad reduction in the population." Rob did not move. "Well, I go out to get you," the Sheriff said. "I don't like it, because I've always liked you—if you are a stubborn mule." His exasperation mounted. "From my side of the fence, I'd never have got in the storm if you hadn't headed there. . . . You can say I didn't have to follow you, but from my stand, I had to."

"I reckon you did."

"Anyhow, I got there—and twice you saved my life. . . . Now I'm trying to know what I ought to do. . . . You killed a man, and the law says you ought to die for it. You saved me when you could have died for trying to do it, and it don't seem right you should be killed for that. It's wha. do you owe a good man for saving a man, against what you owe a man for killing a bad man? . . . Now if you'd tell me why you killed him—if it was because he'd harmed the girl? Did that poor little fool Puppy mean to fall in the canal?"

Beside him, Rob made no answer, but crimson, dark as the red of angry dawn, ran up his throat and cheeks, staining even the suddenly heaving chest. "So that was the way of it!" the Sheriff said. "He was always a no-good swine with women!" Rob's attitude remained unchanged except for the change in his breathing, but the dark eyes looking at the sea had filled with tears. "God damn you!" the Sheriff said bitterly. "You won't help yourself—why should I try to help you?" But he knew that under similar circumstances he would not have talked.

"Better let me fix that arm o' yours," Rob said.

"Hell!" the Sheriff muttered. The strong brown hands were gentle with the agony of the arm. When it was splintered, Rob brought him a can of water caught from where a tree limb spilled a trickle of collected rain. "It's mighty salty, but I set up some more cans to catch the rain straight."

"You can't expect me just to make out your case for you," the Sheriff said under the combined stress of emotion and physical agony. "I can't just say: 'I don't have any proof, but I believe he was justified. . . . I can be all wrong, but what I think is, you had a reason—if there's ever a reason for killing outside the law! But don't stick to this blind! If you won't talk and I take you back, it's life or the chair. Jail is bad. If you go to jail, you'll be an old man when you get out. The electric chair isn't good, either. It's the end of fishing in the creeks when the bees are around till the sun sounds as if it was singing. It's no more spear-fishing at night. No more thinking of finding a girl that loves you. No thinking there may be kids of your own some day. It's a minute that's worse than when we went under the rubbish—because you can't struggle. A minute when everyone under the sky's against you—and it's you who got to die. It's a man's body being carried off stiff and ugly and stuck in the ground. . . . All I'm asking is your word I'm right how it was!"

"Would you be a-talkin'?" Rob said.

The Sheriff ran his good hand—that held the gun—through his salt-stiffened hair, and groaned.

"Coast Guard's comin'," Rob said noncommittally, listening to a distant sound of engines. He stood up, brown, near-naked. "I get your way o' seein' it, Sher'ff, but I'm goin' to walk inter the bushes yonder. I don't reckon you're a-goin' to shoot me, but effen you aim to, there ain't no hard feelin's. Effen you tell the Coast Guard I'm here, I'm goin' to swim fer it—it'll take 'em some time to get roun' the key. Maybe I can hide in the floatin' wreckage. Maybe I cain't. Effen they're goin' to get me, I'm goin' to sink, breathin' water, an' I reckon I can drown like th' Indians showed me. . . . Effen you *don't* tell, I'll make me a raft an' get to shore an' get a boat an' get down the islands. Mildred and Alice are took care of; but when I make out, one day, I'll send fer Gran'ma and Shrimp. They got no one but me. . . . Now I'm startin' walkin'."

"God of honest men, show me what I ought to do!" the Sheriff prayed. One thing he could not do, and that was shoot. But what for the rest? . . . A man had taken a life. A man had given a life. The law of men still said that the man must pay for the life he had taken. And whether he paid by death or by prison, it would kill the eagle thing, the free thing and the strongly gentle thing. He, the Sheriff, would have killed it. How then would he, the Sheriff, stand with God? He pushed his sweating face against the crook of his good arm, and his hand clenched to a fist.

The beat of engines became a launch lifting bow-waves through the rain. The launch rushed closer, and he knew the men in it. They also recognized him. "Lor', Sher'ff, how you got yourse'f here?" a voice was drawling at him through a megaphone.

The Sheriff stood up, swaying on his feet. His hurricane-battered face was suddenly tranquil, and he knew that when he spoke, his own voice would be as drawlingly assured as the voice from the boat—and that he would make the right answer.

HE HAD KNOWN PARIS IN THE HOT WAR. NOW HE WAS BACK AGAIN IN THE COLD WAR TO HANDLE AN EVEN MORE DANGEROUS SECRET-SERVICE JOB.

by PHILIP CLARK

Passport

PARIS is one town in the world where you can kiss a girl in full summer sunshine, smack in the middle of a crowded business-street sidewalk, without calling forth one wolf-whistle, one lifted eyebrow, or even one slightly turned head.

I wasn't planning to do any kissing right then. I was strictly minding my own business, walking along the Rue Darman in the financial district down behind the Bourse, toward a not-very-welcome business appointment. I was going to meet my man in the Café Darman, a big brassy joint that was just a few strides ahead now. I wasn't happy about any part of it, but I was committed beyond recall, and I was very busy as I walked, carefully rehearsing the minutely prearranged, totally insincere part I was going to play. Then there were quick footsteps on the pavement behind me, and a girl's voice, very breathless, very American, was calling, "Martin! Martin Reece! *Wait* a minute!"

I hadn't the least idea who it was, but I stopped abruptly and swung around. She ran full tilt into me, and I put up my hands to steady both of us. She was hatless and breathless and laughing, and I knew then who she was, all right. Her name was Joyce

You get a tremendous sense of time-depth in Paris—a feeling of human life and struggle.

to Jeopardy

Shane, and we'd kept a lot of company a while back—at a time when I needed companionship badly and hers had been very nice to have. It seemed the most natural thing in the world to kiss her by way of saying hello, and I did. I didn't know how long she'd been in Paris, but obviously not long enough to be kissed as publicly as that without blushing. She did blush—very prettily.

I said, "Well—who'd have guessed it!"

Joyce said, "Did you know I was here, Martin? Did you come all those three thousand long miles just to embrace me passionately while fifty million Frenchmen look on and cheer?"

"Of course," I lied cheerfully. "And not for just one embrace, either—"

She backed away hastily. "No, please! I'm not that well acclimatized yet. But what are you doing here, Martin?"

"Business," I said. "Dull, drab and drizzly business. I'm in export-import, in case you've forgotten. What's *your* racket?"

Half-soberly, half-melodramatically, Joyce said, "Freedom, Martin. The defense of the free world."

I knew they'd sent over a lot of civilian personnel to help organize the

Rear view of Notre Dame, Paris.

framework of Eisenhower's NATO army: the army that was going to stand—we hoped—between western Europe and slavery. Between America and slavery, for that matter. It was like Joyce to want to be with them. I grinned at her. "That sounds like a large order for one medium-sized girl."

"Don't be cynical, Martin. It takes a lot of small orders to make one large one. I'm in the matériel-allotment section, on the civilian side. But if you wanted to be a little loose with your language, you could say I was on General Eisenhower's staff."

"Does the General know it yet?"

"Maybe not in so many words. But I did see him once—way down at the end of a corridor. Are you going to be over for long, Martin?"

"Maybe a week," I said. "Maybe two weeks. Shall we go places?"

"I'd love it. Will you show me the Paris that's not in the guidebooks?"

I said, "The last time I was here, I was too busy trying to stay alive to see even the Paris that was *in* the guidebooks. But we'll work it out. Where are you staying?"

She told me. I said, "Maybe tonight, if I can shake free. I'll call you up."

Joyce said regretfully, "I'll be out tonight; I've got a date with a couple of creeps from my section. But I think they're planning to take me to the Rotonde. You could look for us there."

"I'll try to make it," I said. "If not then, soon after. It'll be fun."

I meant it. I liked Joyce a lot. And it would be a blessed relief from the rest of it to go around with her, to have the release of her fresh, unaffected enthusiasm as a sort of counterpoint to this damned job I was on.

Joyce said, "Did you know Candace Winslow was in Paris?"

Of course it was just coincidence, but for her to mention Candace was an odd, hollow echo to my thoughts. I said carefully, "Yes, I knew Bruce and Candace were here. I'm planning to see them."

It had to be said with care—and with the emphasis on *Bruce and* Candace. I didn't know how much Joyce knew about Candace Winslow and me. I had been on the rebound from Candace when I first met Joyce. I hadn't ever talked about it, but girls have a way of guessing close to home sometimes. I didn't want her to do any more guessing than was strictly necessary now. Joyce said, "Bruce Winslow is head of my section. He's a very big wheel in all this. *He* doesn't have to stand at the end of a corridor to see the General."

I said, "Well—I've known Bruce for a long time. Maybe I can fix it up with him for you to take in the General's mail every third Thursday."

I made it sound light, but all the lightness was gone out of it. If she

was in Bruce Winslow's section, she'd be in a position to know—to notice. So without ever letting her know, I'd be using her too. I couldn't in clear duty afford not to—and now there'd be no fun in Joyce Shane's company either.

Joyce said, "Don't look now, but there's a little man at a café table just behind you who's staring a hole in us."

I said, "Undoubtedly my business date. Don't mind him. He's just jealous."

Joyce said, "No, I won't keep you. Come and look for me at the Rotonde tonight if you have time, Martin. I'm awfully glad you're here—and good-by now."

She gave me a quick, warmly affectionate smile, and turned away into the crowd. I stood a moment, watching her go. I liked Joyce Shane a lot. But now I was sorry I'd met her.

I turned toward the crowded sidewalk tables of the Café Darman. A short, stout man stood up, smiling politely, and I walked toward him, hand extended. I said, "Sorry to keep you waiting, Monsieur Tourcy."

He gave me a broad and Gallic wink. "Think nothing of it, Monsieur Reece. For a pretty girl, everything waits—perforce patiently."

We sat down, he clapped briskly for the waiter, and we ordered our drinks. Then he turned back to me with a smile. It was a frankly inquisitive look, but not in the least offensive—one businessman sizing another up for the first time. I gave him the same treatment. Right off, I rather liked M. Tourcy, and that was bad too. It would have been so much easier if he'd been some way a heel—had seemed grasping or devious or in any other fashion unpleasant and easy to dislike. But I just saw a stout, jovial little man in early middle age—good-humored, frank, with an air of politely restrained bustle and hurry. Obviously sincere, and that was what hurt. Because there was nothing sincere on my side of the deal. I was going to use M. Daniel Tourcy callously, cynically, as a piece of window-dressing. I was going to waste his time, and get his hopes up, and then leave him flat without a word of explanation. I wished Ross Corliss had picked me out someone a little less likable to use as a pawn.

The waiter brought our *fines,* and we raised our glasses in salute. M. Tourcy said, "You've just arrived, Monsieur Reece?"

"Last night," I said. "I flew in to Orly."

"You speak French very well."

It was by way of a question too. I said, "I was here a year in '38, with International Export. I went into business for myself in New York the next year. And then I came back in '44 along with the rest of the Army."

M. Tourcy nodded amiably. "You came through Paris that time too?"

I turned the glass in my fingers, remembering. I said, "The 25th of August—at four in the morning."

I said it deliberately, for my own private information, because I wanted to know if that was still a magic date in France—the day that Paris was free again. I wanted to know if that memory still had meaning, even now in the days of returning fear, with the dark red thunderhead of invasion and conquest lowering from the east again. I wanted to see what kind of look came into a Frenchman's eyes when you named that date. The look on M. Tourcy's face was transparent as a child's hope. His eyes misted a little, he flushed, and his stout body stiffened with emotion in his chair. He spoke soberly, and with deep feeling, as he raised his glass and said, "To the day of liberation, Monsieur Reece. May it never be forgotten! May it never need to come again!"

I raised my glass too. I said, "Please God, never again!"

Because that was a glory no sane man would ever wish to call down twice on any city or nation—that crazy day that Paris was free once more. M. Tourcy drained off his glass and clapped again for the waiter. We talked for a few minutes about that other war—still so close and yet somehow so ancient now—and about how things were going in France. They were not really good yet, but were getting slowly better. And about the headway M. Tourcy insisted was being made, slowly but steadily, to reduce the power of the Communists in his country. He had a fine translucent faith that the corner was turned now; that the help we were bringing had turned the tide. I hoped his faith would be justified. Then, finally, elliptically and after the French manner, we got down to business. . . .

Ross Corliss had said, in that quiet, deliberately hidden-away little office in Washington: "The cover story—the reason for going over—has got to be perfect, Martin. And you know as well as I do, the perfect cover story is the true one, the one that doesn't need any faking. That's why I'm calling you back for this job. You're in the import business; all it needs is to work up a perfectly natural deal of the kind you would be making anyhow."

Now I was making it—or pretending to do so.

M. Tourcy began: "In your letter, Monsieur Reece, you mentioned Mesnie silks—"

I had, and for a very good reason: that it would be almost impossible to close a deal. Mesnie silks were hand-loomed, hand-dyed, rich, heavy and very expensive. What with transportation and import duties, an American firm would go broke if it bought more than a small quantity. But I said, "I may have a buyer. This is very tentative, of course. Depending on the quantity available, and the price—"

M. Tourcy pursed his lips. "I know of an available stock." He named a quantity that would have made a very big deal of it indeed. He named a price that no American firm in its right mind could possibly meet for such an amount. But I expressed restrained interest. I'd known it would be like this, had planned it to be so: Days of inconclusive negotiation to account for my stay in Paris. Then, regretfully—

Ross Corliss had said, "How many people knew you were in Counter-Intelligence during the war, Martin?"

I'd answered, "No one, except people like you who were supposed to know. I was undercover from the start."

"Not even Bruce Winslow?"

"I never told him."

Not even though Bruce had been my closest friend for years—the man I liked and admired most in the world.

"Not even Winslow's wife?"

"Nor Candace, either. Maybe if I'd married her I'd have told her. But—in case you've forgotten, Ross—I didn't marry her."

"I haven't forgotten," Ross Corliss had said. "I know it was tough for you. Now—can't you see, Martin? You're the man for the job. It's natural for you to go. No one will suspect you're an agent for us. You know the Winslows, you know Paris, you have contacts there."

I'd said, "There are two impossible angles to this, Ross. One is that I like Bruce Winslow too much, I've known him too long, to take very kindly to the idea of spying on him. And I just can't make myself believe this fantastic stuff your people say they have on him. So I couldn't possibly do an objective job for you, even on that count. Besides—and you know it quite well—I was in love with Candace Winslow before she and Bruce were married. I don't enjoy having to tell you this, but it makes a difference: I'm still in love with her."

Ross Corliss had said quietly, "It doesn't make enough difference. You are still the man. I know how you feel about the whole deal. But look at it this way: Do it *because* you're fond of them—to help them. This thing *must* be cleared up, Martin; if not by you, then, it'll be done by somebody else. Somebody who might mess it all up, do them terrible, unnecessary damage from clumsiness, from not knowing them as well as you do."

He knew he had the screws where they would hurt the worst. He'd turned them and turned them till I'd given in.

So now I was in Paris again. M. Tourcy picked up his briefcase from beside the table. We were still a long way from making a deal on that Mesnie silk, but he wasn't giving up hope. I was seeing to it that he didn't. He'd probably be able to come down a little on the price; I'd come up a little. But not enough to meet. Just enough to keep things going until I found out.

M. Tourcy called the waiter and hospitably waved off my bid to share the freight.

"My pleasure—for the meeting," he said. "To welcome you back to France. We'll talk again soon?"

I said, "I'll have to cable."

He said briskly, "Of course, of course. But we'll come together on this, Monsieur Reece. I feel it in my bones. Meantime, if I can do anything to make your stay pleasanter—"

There was nothing in the script that required me to waste his free time too. I said, "Thanks. We might, at that. But I've a lot of friends to look up."

He laughed, remembering Joyce. "It seems they look you up most charmingly. Ah, to be young and single again!"

He gave me a brisk, warm handshake, said, "Until soon, my friend!" and walked away.

I watched him vanish into the swirling sidewalk crowd. A nice little guy. Not really trying to squeeze me on this silk deal, just honestly working to do business. He could get a commodity at a certain price, and he thought I wanted it. I liked him. I didn't like what I was doing to him. But it had gone off fine. Ross Corliss would have been very pleased at how well it had gone off. My cover story was most neatly buttoned up. I'd see the good little M. Tourcy again, many times, but from now on he didn't matter to the plot at all.

It was noon, and the café was filling up from the Bourse and the thousand offices around. I figured I might as well eat where I was. And I had two phone calls to make, one to Candace Winslow. I wanted to put that off forever, but it had to be sometime today. The other was to Roger Payot. I didn't mind that so much. At least with Roger I'd be dealing from a clean deck. . . .

Ross Corliss had said, "There'e one thing we'll have to take a chance on, Martin. You'll have to have a solid, safe contact with some one in the French police. And you'll have to find it yourself. I don't want to go through channels on any part of this. Not yet, anyhow. Do you have a contact? Do you know anyone over there you can trust absolutely?"

I'd said, "Absolute trust is quite an order. I've known only three people I'd give that to. You're one. Bruce Winslow has always been another. Roger Payot is the third. He was a group leader in the police division of the Paris Underground during the war. I worked with him in Paris when we went in."

"He didn't know you were Counter-Intelligence?"

"No. I was just doing a military liaison job, as far as he knew."

"He'll have to know now."

"It won't bother him. I've never seen him bothered by anything."

"He's still a cop?"

"Administrative job," I said. "He got promoted for what he did during the liberation."

Ross Corliss had thought it over. "It sounds all right. But meet with him just once, before you've seen the Winslows. After that, only by phone. You understand, Martin—no matter how plausible your cover story is, from the moment you drop in on Bruce Winslow, you may be watched. Maybe by our own people, though I hope to God it hasn't got that far yet. Almost certainly by theirs."

It was sound procedure, of course; and right now it gave me that much more excuse to put off the call I hated to make, the one to Candace Winslow. But no matter what the circumstances, it was going to be wonderful to see Roger again. I went to the pay-phone at the back of the café and called the Prefecture.

There was a brief delay, then Roger's voice came on the wire. Deep, calm, imperturbable, as I would always remember it. I had a swift vision of him as I'd first seen him in that madhouse of a Paris battling itself free: Standing in a doorway a foot out of the fire-line of a German machine gun up the street, giving the quiet orders that sent his victory-drunk F.F.L.'s up to the roof to knock out the gun and liberate one more street from the collapsing *Wehrmacht*. The French are supposed to be an excitable, volatile race. But the only completely self-possessed human being I had ever known was Roger Payot—a Paris cop, a Frenchman of Frenchmen, a man anyone would be very lucky to name as friend.

"This is Martin, Roger—Martin Reece," I said, into the pay-phone.

Of course I hadn't been able to let him know I was coming. He just said mildly, "You have a habit of dropping in unannounced, *mon vieux*. But why not, when you know how welcome you are?"

I said, "I need your help. Can I see you this afternoon?"

He said instantly, "How soon? I get off duty at four. Do you need me before that?"

"No," I said. "Four would be fine. Also, if we could meet as unobtrusively as possible, I'd appreciate it."

"Complete security?"

"It wouldn't hurt."

"Bien," Roger said. "In the Rue Darnelle, near the Odéon, there is a little bistro called the Café des Quatres Fleurs. Be there at four-fifteen."

I said, *"Entendu,* Roger."

"Understood, also. Until then, my friend."

I hung up the phone and went back to my lunch. For the first time, for the very first moment since Ross Corliss had sent for me, I felt something like hope. Not confidence—I didn't dare go as far as that. But Roger's quiet voice, his instant, adequate response to any need at any moment, was like a shot of brandy after a bad night.

I still had Candace Winslow to call, but I put it off till I'd finished lunch. Then I put it off some more until I'd had coffee and a liqueur. Then I had a yen to prowl what had been my favorite part of Paris in the old prewar days, around the Place St. Germain. I figured I could call Candace just as well from over there. So I caught a bus across the river to the Left Bank, and had a beer in the Brasserie Lipp. Then it was two-thirty, and I knew it was silly to torture myself any longer. I called the Hotel Henri de Valois, where I knew Bruce and Candace were staying. I was hoping she wouldn't be there.

But she was. Candace Winslow had a wonderful voice. Low-pitched, vibrant, with always a hint of the word unsaid, the emotion there but somehow just beyond expression. Even now, after two years, it turned me inside out and left me shaken and feverish. She said, "Martin, you—you ghost! How long have you been in Paris? Why didn't you let us know?"

Perfectly ordinary words, but as I listened my hand on the receiver was wet with sweat. I said, "It was a rush business trip, Candace. I didn't have time to write. When can I see you?"

"How about right now?"

"I'm tied up till late afternoon."

"Cocktails at six then? If I'm specially lucky, Bruce might even be home by then."

"That would be fine. How is Bruce?"

"Oh, he's—" Was I too acutely on guard at that moment? Or was there really a flicker of hesitation, a small, bitter pause before Candace went on, "Bruce is fine. You know how he is. Working his head off, of course. He'll be awfully pleased to see you, Martin. I will be too. It's been a long time."

Illustrated by MAURICE BOWER

Every once in a while the Arab would leave, but he always came back. . . . He only wanted to be sure we loved him.

Silly even to want to ask her whose fault that was. I said, "Oh, you know how time gets away from you. At six then, Candace."

I hung up. So easy, so simple. And every bit as bad as I'd expected it to be. Candace and I had been engaged for six crazy, ecstatic months. Then abruptly she had broken it off. Five months later she had married Bruce Winslow. It still hurt.

At four-fifteen on the nose, two hours later, I turned into the Rue Darnelle. It was a stubby little street, one block long with a bend in the middle, and open at both ends. The Café des Quatres Fleurs was right at the bend. A totally ordinary little Paris workingman's bistro, with a zinc-topped bar and a half-dozen battered tables. The proprietor, a fat man with a drooping handlebar mustache, was leaning against the bar. I stood in the door, looking around, while the *patron* looked me over. There was no one else in the place. The proprietor was satisfied with his inspection. He said, "This way, please, Monsieur."

I followed the line indicated by his jerked thumb into the back room. Roger Payot stood up to greet me. He was in civilian clothes, and I couldn't see that he'd changed at all. He came over to me in two strides, and his hands gripped down on my shoulders. I'm not small, but Roger is a good inch taller, and he could give me thirty pounds any time. But not an ounce of it fat. A strong, long, broad-boned face—the face of a man who thinks a long time before he speaks, and doesn't bother to think in the first place unless there's something to think about. He said, "Welcome back, Martin. Even with troubles—*especially* with troubles—welcome."

His big hands gripped down in hard affection, and then let go. There was a bottle on the table, and he poured for both of us. It wasn't in his nature to waste time on inconsequentials. He said, "This trouble, Martin: Personal, maybe? Or business? Or political?"

"All three," I said. "Something bad for me, bad for America, bad for France too. Treason, Roger."

He didn't change expression. He shoved a chair toward me, filled both our glasses again, and waited. I said, "It's understood that no word of this goes beyond you?"

He nodded, and no oath written in blood could have meant more than that nod. I said, "I'll lay it down fast. You know that the fate of us all depends on my country and yours, and all the free nations, standing together against Russia. You know that we're sending troops and weapons and supplies to help hold the line. Eisenhower's here; it's beginning to shape up at last—but we're still a long way from real security. The Russians want to keep us that far, and farther. They'll do anything they can to that end. Naturally, we have a lot of personnel in Paris, civilian as well as military, to handle our end of the job.

Many of them deal with matters of security-importance, that the Reds would like dearly to know about. The loyalty of these people must be beyond question. But one of them, a man named Bruce Winslow, is now believed to have been in contact with a known Communist agent. I'm here to find out if it's true, if it's still going on—and to stop it if it is."

ROGER said slowly, "You know this Winslow personally?"

"I know him very well," I said. "He's been one of my best friends."

"You think this charge is apt to be true?"

"I think it's incredible. But the source of the information is very trustworthy. I have to assume it may be accurate."

"Naturally," Roger said. "What details can you give me?"

"All we have," I said, "but that's not much. There's absolutely nothing known in Bruce Winslow's past to point to any pro-Russian leanings whatever. There isn't any indication that he's in debt or in any way in need of money. There's no visible motive whatever, but this one thing is known: A man known as Adolph Schreiber was identified a short while ago by our Intelligence as being a Communist spy contact—a courier. Our people were playing him along, watching him for leads. They played him just a little too long. Maybe he found out he was being tailed, maybe his job was finished; anyhow, forty-eight hours before they were due to pick him up, he dropped out of sight—so thoroughly, that they think he's managed to get out of the country. They gathered in some of his contacts, all right, but he himself had gone. They also found out that, twice in the past year, this Schreiber had visited Bruce Winslow's home."

"Not so good," Roger said.

"Not good at all." I took another drink of cognac. I needed it. I found it was very rough, this talking about Bruce in a dispassionate, police-blotter fashion. I remembered the years we'd known each other: At college, when he was an admired upper-classman who took time out for no special reason, to be kind to me. The times later, when he'd gone into Government service and was going up fast, and deservedly. Even the bitter last chapter, when Candace had decided it was Bruce she loved, not me. I hadn't wanted to see either of them after that, but it wasn't because I thought any the less of Bruce. It was just because it was too hard. Nothing in the world could have hurt me more than talking about Bruce Winslow like this. But it had to be done.

Roger said reasonably, "Isn't it risky to leave him at his post?"

"Very," I said. "But it's a calculated risk." I remembered Ross Corliss when he was doing the calculating: minutely and carefully; this danger against that possible gain. "They've added it all up. They figure they can give me two weeks to work on it—not a day more. It's just good Intelligence practice to find out as much as they can before they face him with the charge. Also, there's a slight question of justice. Maybe—just maybe—these meetings with Schreiber were innocent as far as Bruce was concerned. We still have a Bill of Rights; we still figure the accused has the right for his side to be known. So there's room in the two weeks for that too; but that's nothing I can figure on, from my side. I'm just a cop in this, Roger. You're a cop; you know how it is. It'll be up to the judge and jury to decide. It's my job to prove him guilty—if the guilt is there."

Roger said dryly, "I don't envy you your spot, my friend. It's one I was in many times during the Occupation. We had to render our own justice then. Have you ever had to shoot a life-long friend with your own hand?"

"That's been spared me so far."

"Let's hope your luck will hold, *mon vieux*. . . . What could our Red friends learn from this Winslow, if he were dealing with them?"

"Plenty," I said. "Types of matériel, quantities and locations, and future orders indicating size of units. And just to do his job, he has to be briefed on at least the general direction of the military plans. That's bad enough, but not really the worst—the terrible risk is the morale factor. We've had too many things like this already, Roger. We can't have any more. Consider his post here, in the confidence of all the Pact countries. Consider what he's been: positions of trust high up in the Government for years. Now, at this most critical moment of this most critical operation, to find he's a traitor! Not only to his own country, but to France and all the others who've been trusting us. The shock at this moment would be disastrous."

"Quite," Roger said. "It is most delicate—most difficult."

"And no less so," I said, "if he's innocent, but even *seems* to be guilty. Publicly, I mean. We can't even afford that."

"Very, very difficult. Tell me, Martin—you are working with your military and diplomatic Intelligence here?"

I shook my head. "They don't know anything about me. I'm instructed not to call on them for help. But they'll get it all in two weeks—if I fail."

Roger drummed his fingers slowly on the table. "We must try not to let you fail. What do you wish me to do, Martin?"

I said, "He meets many people here, of course, in the line of his work. It's necessary to know who all those people are. Can you do that?"

Roger turned his glass in his fingers, considering. "I could go through ordinary police channels, of course. But to go to the Surété would have the same drawback as using your own services. Too many hands on so delicate an operation." He seemed to be turning a decision carefully about in his mind. He said finally, "It can be managed, Martin. I think I should tell you how. You have placed great trust in me, in this matter now before us. So I will place one that is at least as great in you. When the Germans overran France in '40, we were unprepared to fight back after the defeat. It took thousands of lives, years of desperate effort, to build the Underground that fought them so well at the end. We are realists, we French, Martin. We know, as a matter of cold logic, that for all the help you can send, for all we can do ourselves, there is always a chance that the Russians may win the first round—that we may have the NKVD on our necks as we had the Gestapo before. A nasty prospect—one to be avoided at all costs. But a good general prepares for all the possibilities, no matter how unpleasant, or unlikely. This time we're not waiting to be occupied. We're getting ready now, just in case."

I SAID soberly, "One hates to think of such a possibility."

Roger said wryly, "It was hating to think of it beforehand the other time that cost so many lives, so much misery. So, for what it may or may not be worth, some preparations have been made. You couldn't call it an organization. It doesn't function—yet. But it does mean there are individuals known to me who can be trusted to gather bits of information you wish, and ask no question." He straightened up, smiling faintly. "Your matter is so serious that I felt I should tell you this, so you can judge how much trust to put in what we find for you. I tell you this in absolute confidence, Martin. You understand what I mean by that."

I understood as well as an American, or anyone who has never lived—and dared to fight back—in a conquered country could understand it. It meant that if I in any way betrayed this trust, Roger could not permit himself to survive that betrayal. I said, "I think you can trust me, Roger."

"I think so too," he said. "As you have trusted me. Now, we must not spend too much time on this; let's get to work."

I gave him all the dope we had on the man Schreiber. It was a false name, of course, and there was no knowing his real one, or how many others he had used, or if there was the faintest chance he had ever been in Paris, or ever would be there. I gave Roger what I could on Bruce Winslow's contacts since he came over—and that would be just a point of departure for Roger. It was a wonderful break that Roger would be able to get the full use of the Paris police dossiers, even of the French military and diplomatic Intelligence, without ever making a formal case of it, or going beyond the people he knew he could count on.

When I had finished, Roger said, "Very well. I'll find out what I can. Shall we meet again?"

I said, "Not directly. I plan to see Winslow tonight. After that it would be too risky."

"Call me, then." He gave me a phone number from which he could speak freely, and hours when he might be called on it. We stood up and he put his hands on my shoulders again. "Good luck, Martin. And one thing: Your Communists in America haven't ever yet got to the point where they've dared use much force. It's been somewhat otherwise here. They can be very dangerous; they kill, on occasion. So—be careful!"

"I'll try to be," I said. "You too."

He smiled thinly. "As a Frenchman, I somehow pawned the right to be careful, back about 1939. We're still trying to get it out of hock."

We shook hands, and he said, "One last little question: When we fought together in the streets in '44—were you also an agent then? Were you perhaps checking on the reliability of one Roger Payot?"

I was only surprised he hadn't asked the question before. "Yes, I was."

He grinned engagingly. "Permit me a slight touch of chagrin. I didn't guess—and I'm not often fooled in such matters. One is always curious to see the figure one cuts in official reports. What did you say about me, Martin?"

I said, "I'm no guy to stick his neck out on paper. I said I thought there was perhaps some small reason for placing confidence in Roger Payot."

The Hotel Henri de Valois was near the Madeleine and was just the kind of place Bruce and Candace Winslow would stay in: expensive, quiet, completely without ostentation but solidly luxurious. I told the man at the desk I was expected, and not to bother to call. He said, "The second floor, monsieur. To the right, and then to the end of the corridor."

I walked up, my feet soundless on the deep carpets, seeing a succession of Martin Reeces pivoting away from me in the mirrors at the landing stages. The characters in the mirrors all looked very calm and self-possessed and matter of fact. The real Martin Reece didn't feel that way at all.

I turned down the corridor toward the Winslow suite. There was a man coming toward me along the hall. He was darkly dressed, and for a moment I thought him a hotel employe. Then I saw that he was carrying a hat and gloves. The light was dim in the hall, but as we passed he turned a little toward me, and for one matching stride we were face to face.

I kept right on walking. It was the only thing to do. One glimpse is not an identification, especially not if you've never seen the man before—only fallible descriptions, poorly remembered by some one, put down on paper. But I was remembering, with burning clarity, the description I had turned over to Roger Payot a half hour before: *"Adolph Schreiber, known spy courier. Description: about 5'9" tall, medium build. Age as given in false naturalization papers, 43 years. Brown hair thinning at temples. Pale complexion, narrow nose with thin nostrils. Almost imperceptible droop in left eyelid. Affects dark suits, always of good quality. Has a trick of carrying hat high up against chest on crooked-back left wrist. . . ."*

"I want you to love me, Martin. But wanting just won't do it."

It would have been very foolish to turn and stare after him. There was a mirror at the end of the hall, but in the poor light all I could see was the retreating back, the high-crooked elbow that was holding the hat and gloves. Then the figure turned at the end of the corridor and was gone.

I could stop then, and I did. I was standing by the next-to-last door on that hallway. The only other door, which had to be the Winslows', was just beyond. I thought, but I couldn't be absolutely certain, that when I first saw the dim figure, it was too far down the corridor to have come from any but the Winslows' door. But the light had been very poor.

I went on down the hall and knocked at the last door. There was no answer, and I knocked again. The door opened, and Candace stood there.

I could swear that for a moment she didn't recognize me at all. She was beautiful as always, but pale, with tired circles under her eyes. She stood staring at me wide-eyed, and I stared back. It was a very curious moment.

Then I said, "I'm Martin Reece, Candace. Remember? The guy you were going to give a cocktail to, at six o'clock."

She managed to pull a smile across her face. "Martin! Of course—it's so damned dark in that hall—"

She took both my hands and drew me into the room. She was being very gay now, but I thought she was working at it. She said, "Please forgive me; I was sound asleep when you knocked—I've had a bad headache—"

I said, "Look—I'm going to be around for a while. If you're not feeling well—"

"Don't be silly, I'm feeling fine now. Bruce knows you're coming—he'll be along any minute. What are we drinking? Martinis? The stuff is all there on the bar—just play host till Bruce gets here."

I mixed a cocktail at the bar. Candace was in high gear again. Her confidence, if it had ever been lost, seemed to be completely recovered. And I thought—maybe I was going overboard too fast. This was bound to be awkward for her too, just at first. She had been in love with me for a while, even if it didn't last. This was bound to be a little sticky for her too.

But if it had been, she was well over it. She said, "Tell me everything, Martin. What you've been doing, where you've been doing it, who you've been doing it with."

She was talking very rapidly, moving about the room, turning on lights against the slowly gathering dusk of early evening. She came back and sat down beside me, and gave me a chance to answer some of the questions she'd been rattling off. I told her what I'd been up to the last couple of years, and about the deal that had brought me to Paris. Candace said, "Maybe Bruce can help you with that, Martin. He has endless contacts. He might know someone who would be useful."

"I'd rather not bother him with it," I said. "It's got nothing to do directly with the defense effort. I'd be embarrassed to ask."

Candace said, "Well, *I* wouldn't be embarrassed to ask for you. It would be a pleasure to help if I could. I don't get much in the line of pleasure these days—"

She stopped abruptly and bit her lip. The words seemed to have slipped out against her will.

I said, "What's the matter, Candace?"

She made a swift, brush-off gesture. "Oh, forget I said it. But—you're an old friend, Martin; I don't have to pretend that it's not a strain, just being here now. It's—oh, everybody is very bright and cheerful and full of confidence on the surface, but underneath and all the time there's a terrible anxiety: 'Can we get ready in time? Will the Russians move before we get ready?' It goes on and on. It's telling on Bruce—on all of us. It's—I'm sorry I popped off."

"Don't be," I said. "It's perfectly natural. I can understand how it is, even in as short a time as I've been here."

She shrugged, and just for a moment longer she didn't bother to be bright and gay. She sat staring at the forgotten cocktail glass in her hand, and I watched her. She was a very beautiful girl, with just-off-auburn hair, the cream-flawless skin that goes with that coloring, and fine straight features. She had a curious, exasperating trick of seeming to be utterly, transparently sincere and genuine, and then suddenly going off into some part she'd thought up and was playing at you just for effect—just to see what would happen; and then switching back to direct simplicity just as definitely. It could be very disconcerting sometimes. It made it hell to be in love with her—and it was one of the most poignant reasons why I had been. And I knew then, as I'd all too well expected, that just being there with her again was the toughest part of this whole impossible job.

She lifted her head suddenly and met my look. She was being direct and transparent now. She said quietly, "Well, Martin?"

I said, "Well, Candace?"

"Tell me what you were thinking. Just exactly—no camouflage."

"With no camouflage whatever, I was thinking that Bruce Winslow is one of the finest men who ever lived—and also that I wish he'd never been born."

Candace said slowly, "Would it help if I told you that I stopped being in love with you before I met Bruce?"

I said, "I don't know if it would help—but it would uncomplicate the emotions a bit."

She said, "Well, it's true. I just stopped loving you. I don't know why, really. You're an awfully nice guy, Martin; I like you very much."

It was one of those completely impossible moments that have to be made possible in order to go on living. I said, "Well—thanks. And I like you too, Candace."

She was looking at me very hard now. "In spite of everything, Martin? You really do still like me?"

I said, "I just told you so."

Her seriousness was almost too intense to seem real now. She said, "If I needed help—serious help, maybe hard to give—would you give it to me, Martin?"

It was a very bad moment, for I was still extremely fond of her. Then I thought of why I was there; I thought of the man I'd seen going down the hall. I said, "Try me out, Candace."

She stood up abruptly. "Oh, I'm a little crazy! Or not a little—a lot! I told you—it's the strain, the uncertainty. Forget all this, Martin. And please, *please* don't ever mention it to Bruce." She walked about the room restlessly. "I wish he'd come along. He said we'd all go out together somewhere."

Almost like an echo, the phone rang. Candace answered it. Her face was toward me, and it went set and angry at what were evidently the first words. "Oh, Bruce!" she said. "Well, if you can't help it—but it's getting to be— Yes, he's here now—"

She held the phone out to me. "Affairs of high importance again; he can't get away. He wants to speak to you."

I said hello to Bruce. He sounded tired and exasperated, but as if he were trying hard to be friendly and welcoming. He said, "Look, Martin, I'm awfully sorry about this. I just can't make it this evening. Be a good egg and take Candace somewhere and feed her. And try me again—tomorrow, maybe. I'll try—but you know how things are here now."

I put the phone down and turned back to Candace. "It seems I've promised to nourish you and take you out on the town. Where would you like to start?"

Candace said, "Martin, please don't think I'm a worm, but I don't want to go anywhere. I really do have a headache. Could we make it tomorrow, maybe?"

I said maybe we could. And there wasn't much else to do then but honor that very flexible headache of Candace's, and be on my way.

In the hall outside, the door to the next suite, the only other door on the corridor, was open as I passed. I glimpsed a hotel maid inside, and on impulse I turned back and knocked. The maid said, "You wish something, monsieur?"

I said, "I'm looking for the suite of a Monsieur Garnier—is this it?"

The girl looked baffled. "I don't recall a Monsieur Garnier in the hotel. Certainly not in this suite, monsieur. This is quite vacant. I've just now unlocked it to clean."

I said, "Thank you. There seems to be a confusion somewhere."

There did indeed. Candace had been sound asleep when I knocked—so she said. Either she was lying, or the man with the crooked-up elbow had come toward me from an empty suite that had been locked until this moment. . . .

It was too early to call Roger again, and a lot too early to go looking for Joyce Shane and her "two creeps from the section" at the Rotonde. I wasn't hungry, but I did want a drink. And a chance to get the feel of Paris again. I knew what a lot of people back home were saying, and printing—that the French wouldn't fight, that they were shot through with defeatism, that the Red Fifth Column inside the country

could take over any time they got the sign. I didn't want to believe that, but I had to admit I didn't really know.

I was heading in a general sort of way toward Montparnasse, where I'd look for Joyce and her friends, so I dropped off the bus at the Place St. Michel and walked up the boulevard. It was a fine evening, and the crowds were thick in the streets. Students from the Sorbonne, artists with flamboyant beards, a lot of uniforms once more, a number of just plain people out for the air, strolling, laughing, arguing, streaming along past the bright sidewalk cafés, along under the gray old walls of Cluny. You get a tremendous sense of time-depth in Paris—a feeling of human life and struggle that has fought and striven from darkness toward light for two thousand years, and that somehow mustn't be stopped or lost.

WALKING that way, I remembered another dark time on that same street. That 25th of August, 1944, when I had come in as a soldier in the army that set Paris free. It had been dusk then, as it was dusk now, but that had been a dawn dusk, a day just breaking. We had come down that same Boulevard St. Michel, and there were no other vehicles in the streets but the jeeps and half-tracks of our column, and no place for any. There was still heavy firing going on where the last pockets of German resistance were being dug out, but the crowds that were solid in the avenues paid no attention. They could barely be bumper-pushed to let us through; they ran beside us when we moved; they patted and hugged and kissed us when we stopped. There was a kind of cheering all the time, a steady, deep-drawn note that never let up and never rose beyond a kind of pain-stopped exultation. I hope never to hear so thrilling a sound as that again, because I hope there'll never be the kind of misery and despair that had gone before, which gave it being—a hope against hope in this world today, but one that can't be abandoned. I remembered the column swinging off the Boulevard St. Michel to get around a heavy fire-fight down by the river that sent bullets whining unheeded over the head of that crazy, freedom-drunk crowd, and then the old gray bell-tower of St. Germain des Pres rising calm and timeless into the pale dawn above the fighting.

And I remembered the days following, when it was all over, when people came up to you on the street and just touched your uniform and walked away without speaking. As if you were something holy; as if you were a fair emissary of dear heaven itself, because you had brought back freedom. No people could hold to an ecstasy like that, of course. No people should even be asked to try. But it was hard to believe there wasn't even an echo of it.

"No—no, I haven't got it. It's no use!"

I turned into a shiny little bistro to get that drink I'd been wanting, and I took it standing up at the bar. At my left three soldiers with armored-force insigne on their berets had their heads together over their Pernods; on my right there was a youngish chap in a flashy sport coat and a tieless shirt. The bartender put my drink down for me. I made some minor remark about the weather, and he responded with detached amiability of barkeeps the world over. The youth in the sport coat lifted his head at the sound of my unmistakable accent. He didn't spit, exactly, but he didn't stop much short of it either. There was a burning fanatic hate in his face as he said, "Go back home, American. You're not wanted here. Go back to Wall Street. Go on back, I tell you!"

I looked at him for a moment, then shrugged and turned away. Among the many things I couldn't afford, a brawl with a boulevard Communist was high up on the list. But the furious man in the sport coat wasn't going to let it go at that. He reached over and plucked at my sleeve. I moved down the bar a little, and he followed. The bartender was watching us nervously.

The three tankers had lifted their head and were watching too. The tallest tapped me politely on the shoulder. He said, "Will you join us, monsieur? Just possibly, you may find the company at this end of the bar more agreeable."

It was very nicely done, and should have been the end of that. But the lad in the sport coat must have been very drunk. He glared at the three soldiers. *"Militaires!"* he said. "Cossacks! Jackals of corruption—"

EXPRESSIONS of identically pained disgust crossed the faces of the three soldiers. They moved deftly around me and faced the man in the sport coat in a tight little circle. The bartender said anxiously, "Please, *messieurs!* No trouble now! *Allons!* Take your politics outside."

The tall soldier said, "There won't be any trouble." He was standing

The man by the cab said, "Get out. Very slowly. I won't hesitate to kill you if I must."

very close to my friend in the sport coat, his two buddies flanked tightly on either side. They weren't touching the man in the sport jacket. They didn't have to. They just stood very still and looked at him. He glared back defiantly; then his nerve broke, and his eyes flickered up and away from those three level stares. He said shrilly, "You're blocking my path!"

"Perish the thought, monsieur," the tall soldier said ironically. He stepped back with a flourish. "Good night, little Red," he said politely to the retreating back. "Good night—bad dreams—and keep going!"

I felt a good bit better after that. I thought maybe there was still an echo, after all. And the three tankers were very good company for the couple of hours I still had to kill. . . .

I made it up to the Rotonde a little after ten. The big sprawling sidewalk café was jammed, and at first I couldn't see the group I was looking for. Then I heard Joyce Shane calling my name above the hubbub. She was waving at me from a table right at the edge of the sidewalk. When I got to her table, one of the two men with her stood up, the other didn't. Joyce looked very pretty and rather visibly bored with her company. She said, "The one you're shaking hands with is Arthur Russell. He's record chief in the section. The one in the chair without any manners is Bliss Jordan. There's a rumor around that he paints, but no one could really prove it. Right now he's condescending to work for us as an interpreter—when he bothers to show up, that is."

Russell, the one with manners, was a stout, florid man in his late thirties with slightly bulging eyes. Jordan was much younger. He wore a dark turtleneck sweater instead of a shirt. It took only one quick glance to tell that he was a professional expatriate—a bored-with-life Left Banker who'd probably been in Paris all of a couple of years, and knew all the answers. I didn't think I was going to like either of them. I sat down, and Russell asked me how long I'd been over. I told him two days.

"That's too long already," he said. "Lousy town—lousy people."

He sounded like a man with a perpetual grouch, and a permanent desire to irritate and annoy. I told him I liked Paris. He snorted.

"Wait till you've been over here as long as I have. They're just a bunch

of damned Reds. All of them, no matter what they tell you to your face. They're just playing us along, sucking us in for as much as they can get out of us."

Joyce said wearily, "Oh, for heaven's sake, Arthur! You wore out the grooves on that record weeks ago."

Bliss Jordan said boredly, "Joyce is so right. Friend Arthur is a man of one idea. So let's put his poor, bedeviled brain at rest right away, Mr. Reece: Are you, or have you ever been, a member of the Communist Party?"

I said, "Not to the best of my recollection."

Jordan said, "How about it, Arthur? Will you accept the statement, or shall we order an investigation?"

Russell just snorted again. Jordan said, "Arthur loves to order investigations. He thinks I don't know he had *me* investigated. I bet you didn't know that I knew that—now did you, Arthur?"

Russell said stiffly, "Everyone we hire over here has to be investigated. And a damned good thing too."

Jordan yawned. "Good—but not good enough. Take me, for example. Did they find out that I'm really subsidized straight from Moscow? No, they didn't. Did they discover—"

"Shut up," Joyce said. "Both of you. This got tiresome a long time ago."

But Jordan was obviously a young man who enjoyed needling people. He kept after Russell, and Joyce drew her chair away from them impatiently. She said to me, "I don't know why I put up with them—they've been at this for hours."

I said, "Why don't we ditch them, then? I know better joints than this anyhow."

Joyce said dubiously, "Arthur might make a scene over it. He loves excuses to make scenes."

"Do you care really if he does?"

"Come to think of it," Joyce said, "I don't. Let's go."

We stood up, and Russell stopped pounding the table at Jordan and stared at us. I hadn't noticed before how drunk he was. He said belligerently:

"Where are you going?"

"Just around the block," Joyce said. "Just for a little air. You go right on as you are."

Russell got to his feet, swaying a little. He said furiously, "It's not right! Joyce came with us!"

Joyce said under her breath, "I told you how he'd be. Let's grab a taxi and get out of this."

THERE was a cab sliding along the edge of the curb, and I stepped across the sidewalk to flag it down. Then I saw it was occupied and dropped my arm.

The cab pulled on past, and as it did I chanced to glance inside. The lights from the café were very bright, and there was no mistaking the fine auburn hair of the woman in the cab, or the profile turned away from me. It was Candace Winslow. I couldn't see the man beside her very clearly, but I was sure of one thing—it wasn't Bruce Winslow. I got a glimpse of a pale face over a dark suit, but I couldn't be really sure it was the man I'd seen in the hall. Then the cab was gone. I didn't know if Candace had seen me. Or if Joyce or either of the others had seen Candace.

And there were other things right then to worry about. Russell had me by the arm and was shaking me and yelling that I didn't have any right to take his girl away from him. It was the second time that evening I'd been pawed like that, and I was getting very tired of it. I cocked my arm back to hit him, as Joyce cried, "Oh, please, Martin! Let's not—"

But both she and I failed to reckon on the speed of trained French waiters in a crisis. I don't know just how many embattled white aprons swooped down on our little fracas, but the number was sufficient to the need. I was moving fast along the sidewalk under no steam of my own—and not resisting, for I hadn't really wanted to slug Arthur Russell. The main thing had been to get away from him. Beyond the limits of the café, the phalanx let go of me, and Joyce caught up and took my arm. She was laughing now, and we just kept going. I looked back once. Russell was pounding the table again, with Jordan way down on the small of his back, looking bored and superior to it all.

Joyce said, "Where are we going, Martin?"

"Only a couple of blocks. It's a joint I knew during the war. Maybe it's not even there any more."

But it was. There was one sure thing about Marcel, who ran the place: If he hadn't been operating there, he'd have been somewhere else—and getting by nicely. When it came to morals, Marcel was a very mixed bag. During the Occupation, he was one of the blackest of the black marketeers. He was also one of the most absolutely fearless, completely effective members of the Underground. When the shooting died down, the super-patriots had a hard time making up their minds about him. He was a traitor and a hero all in one. So, being French and logical, they gave him a medal—and six months in jail. The six months didn't bother Marcel much. He'd been there before.

Marcel made a big uproar when we went in. The drinks were on him—it was a holiday, a fête, a Big Time, that I was back! No amateur in such matters, he knew that the finest way to please a friend is to build him up to his girl. He sat with us over the free champagne and gave Joyce to understand that I had freed Paris from the Nazi yoke almost singlehandedly, with just an occasional assist from Marcel. Joyce's French was just good enough to follow the high spots, and she was impressed. I figured I could tell her the truth about all that later. Right then I had to call Roger Payot.

ROGER was crisp and to the point. "Martin, this spy courier, this Adolph Schreiber—one cannot be absolutely certain, but the description is very close. I think he has been known here. Not as Schreiber, of course. Various names, but there is reason to think that his real name is Ardel Patmos, and he is a Bulgarian or a Macedonian Greek or some such. Probably not really a Communist or anything else that didn't pay well at the moment. A professional, you understand, for sale to the highest bidder. Very skillful, though, and quite ruthless. But not seen in Paris for at least two years."

"If we're speaking of the same man," I said, "I think he's back now. I'm almost sure I've seen him."

I was talking over an unenclosed phone, and I couldn't go into details. Roger sensed that.

He asked, "He was in contact with—your friends?"

"Unfortunately, yes."

"Not so good. You'll like this even less. For several months we've had one of our associates as a member in good standing of a Communist underground cell. He brought in very much useful information. One such item was that in the office of your friend—you understand who it is I mean—"

I understood all right: Bruce Winslow's outfit!

"In that office, the Communists have an excellent source of confidential information."

My mouth was dry with apprehension. "Was the source named, Roger?"

His voice was regretful. "No, Martin. Our man knew only that the information was coming out—not who was providing it."

"Could you build a fire under him—get him to find out? It's very important."

"I appreciate that. But it's quite impossible. Someone must have suspected him. He's dead."

I went back to the table feeling very low. I couldn't believe that Bruce Winslow was a traitor. I couldn't believe that Candace could be involved in his treason. Every step I was taking seemed to carry the whole thing farther and farther from sanity. But one thing was certain: If the evidence I

had now was turned in as it was, they'd both be on a plane for America, under guard, in a matter of hours. Bruce's fine record wouldn't prevent that, nor Candace's beauty. The weight of the responsibility on me now was numbing. Ross Corliss had given me two weeks. It looked now as if even that was a totally unjustifiable risk. Mentally I cut it down to one week. Less, if things kept going as they were.

Marcel had gotten off the subject of military exploits finally, and was telling Joyce risqué stories in dialect. I was glad her French was as sketchy as it was. A little Moroccan Arab with an armful of made-in-Passaic Oriental rugs had come in off the street and was trying to sell one to Joyce. Marcel kept telling him to go away, and the Arab would leave, but he always came back.

Marcel said, "This is a very wonderful girl, Martin. You should marry her. Marriage is a fine thing. You'd both be very happy."

I said, "You're a fine one to talk! Are *you* married?"

"Not just at the moment, Martin. But what of that? Must one eat all day to approve of the art of cooking? Excuse me. I must get rid of this interruption."

He got up and pushed the Arab out into the street for what must have been the fifth time. Joyce said, "I like your friend. I like this place. Thanks for bringing me."

"It's a joint," I said, "and Marcel is a crook—but a noble one. Anyhow, it's not in the guidebooks."

"You look awfully gloomy," Joyce said. "Is there anything really wrong?"

There was, but I could hardly tell her what it was. I said, "The hell with it. Let's have fun."

Joyce looked at me a little oddly. She said, "Of course. That's what we came for, isn't it?"

I did a silly thing then. I leaned across the table and took her hand. It made me feel good to do it, and I needed badly to feel good right then. I liked Joyce a lot. She was direct and genuine, and I wished in a queer, detached way that it was she I was in love with. She put her other hand over mine, and smiled at me.

Marcel came back from the door. He said approvingly, "That's better—that's very good! A moment, please, while I get more wine."

I swung my chair around closer to Joyce and put my arm around her. For a moment she held back. She said, "Are we sure we want to do it like this, Martin?"

I said, "I know I'm sure. Let's see how you feel about it."

I tipped her head back and kissed her. Her lips were cool and unresponding for a moment, and then she kissed me, warmly and completely. I felt much better then—much, much better—and worse, at the same time.

That was only the beginning of the confusion. Marcel kept bringing bottles, and after a while we were singing. Joyce had a very nice contralto and she picked up the words quickly. I made a vague mental note never to translate them for her. Then I was aware that the Arab was back again. Somehow he'd got himself a glass and was drinking along with us. He seemed to get very drunk very quickly, but maybe I wasn't judging time too well. I kissed Joyce several more times, and I had a dim idea that I was telling her something extremely important to both of us.

Then the Arab knocked the bottle over, and that made Marcel mad. He threw the Arab out bodily, and locked the door after him. God knows what time it was by then. This must have hurt the Arab somewhere deep in his sensitive Moslem soul, for the front of Marcel's place was a wide window of very small panes, and the Arab decided he could express his chagrin only by breaking the panes one by one, from the outside, with the top of his head. The third one cut him badly, and he bled messily, but kept right on butting them out. Marcel brought him in again and bandaged him with a towel and gave him a couple of hundred francs and kissed him on both cheeks and got rid of him for good. It was all right with the Arab; he'd only wanted to be sure we loved him.

Then I began to pass out, and the rest was very foggy. I had a confused recollection of being push-pulled into a cab. After that it wasn't even confused any more—it was a total blackout.

I remember thinking that this was a dumb way for me to be behaving, and that Ross Corliss would have been very sore if he'd known. I also remember thinking that what Ross Corliss didn't know wouldn't hurt him.

I woke up feeling distinctly awful, but at least I had no headache. There was one thing about Marcel's liquor—however he got hold of it, it was top quality. At first I thought I was back in my hotel, and then I knew I wasn't. I was in bed in a wholly strange room, and the light filtering through the drawn blinds had a toward-noon feel about it.

Then the door opened and Joyce Shane looked in. Girls are incredible that way; she looked cool and neat and in no way hung-over. She said, "I thought I heard the moans of returning consciousness. Try some coffee for size."

I didn't enjoy it much, but I got it down by small sips for the good it would do me. Joyce sat on the edge of the bed. I said, "The face is familiar, but I can't seem to recall the furniture."

"My apartment," Joyce said. "When we left Marcel's, you said you knew where your hotel was. It turned out you didn't. This was the best I could think to do."

"It was very good," I said. "But I hate to think what I'm doing to your reputation."

Joyce smiled faintly. "The concierge is a very broad-minded lady. She helped me and the cab-driver get you to bed. They were both most sympathetic."

"Anywhere but Paris," I said, "I'd have to make an honest woman of you by nightfall."

Joyce looked a little queer. "You don't remember much about last night, do you?"

"Very little about the later stages." I was sitting up now, sipping at the coffee, and looking at her. The more I looked, the more I remembered. It's odd that way sometimes. You think it's all gone, and then each little clue seems to push the fog back an inch or two and you remember more and more. I said very slowly, "Joyce—tell me the truth. Did I propose to you?"

She gave me an off-beat little smile. "You did. But that's all right; I knew it was Marcel's champagne."

"No," I said. "I was confused but not that confused. You'd be a wonderful girl to be married to, Joyce. I wouldn't need Marcel's champagne to know that. Did I want us to be married right away?"

She wasn't smiling any more. "Oh, instantly. You said you had connections so we could cut all the red tape about licenses and things and leave for the Midi inside of twenty-four hours. You talked about a little town called Foix, in the Pyrenees, where you'd been once. You made it sound like a wonderful spot for a honeymoon."

Now I felt really awful. And in spite of it I knew that I'd been talking better sense last night than I possibly could now. Even now, in the cold hard practical light of the morning after, it made a kind of wistful, might-have-been logic. Joyce was sweet and wonderful. She could anchor me somehow, hold me steady while I finished this lousy job fast and at whatever cost, and then we could really go to Foix and I could try to forget about it. It was a brainstorm, but for the moment it seemed like something fine that just possibly could be made to happen. I put the coffee down and took Joyce into my arms.

I said, "Joyce—there's no question of Marcel's champagne now. Let's really get married. Right away. I'll be—I can get free in a few days, and then we will go to Foix. It's a marvelous place. I'd love to take you there."

She lay still in my arms, but her face was turned away, and when I kissed her, her lips stayed cool and remote. But she did have her arms around me.

"Martin—Martin darling," she said, "I'd almost do it. You're very nice—it's a very sweet proposal—but there's one small thing you left out. Or maybe I didn't hear it. Did you say you loved me, Martin?"

I said it fast, to try to make it true. "I love you, Joyce."

But she remained very still in my arms. She said, "That was a nice try, darling—but no cigar. You see, I was watching your face when you saw Candace Winslow in the cab last night. Your face wasn't lying then, Martin. You're still in love with her."

So she knew. And she'd seen Candace. I said, "I don't want to love her. I want to love you."

Suddenly, she was crying, but very quietly. She pushed away from me. "And I want you to love me. That's a terrible thing to say, isn't it? A girl's a hopeless fool to tell a man a thing like that. But wanting won't do it, Martin. It just won't—won't—*won't!*"

She turned away blindly. "Can't you see? You love Candace. You can't have her—she's married to Bruce Winslow, and he's your friend. You think, if you were just married to me, it would be all right, somehow. But ask yourself one question, Martin. Suppose something happened to Bruce—to their marriage, I mean. Suppose Candace were free again. How about that, Martin? Answer me honestly."

I certainly owed her that much. I said, "I don't know, Joyce. I really don't know."

She stood up. She wasn't crying any more, and I thought suddenly that Joyce Shane wasn't just pretty, she was beautiful—from deep inside, where it really counts and lasts. I wanted to start all over again, to do it better somehow, but I knew it was too late. Joyce said, "Don't look so miserable, darling. It's all right. It was just Marcel's champagne. It was wonderful champagne—a wonderful evening. I've got to go now. I'm hours late from the job. I think I'm going to have to take quite a ribbing from Russell and Jordan."

"Send them to me," I said. "I'll give them something to rib about."

"They don't matter," Joyce said. "Nothing matters, really. It's all going to come out in the wash."

She was making up at her dressing-table, and in a minute she'd be gone. And now I really hated what I had to do. But I was on a job, and the stakes were very high. I said, "Joyce—you said something about some kind of trouble for Bruce Winslow, that might make trouble for him and Candace. Was that just a shot in the dark, or do you really know of something?"

Her hands were at her hair, and she held them quite still there, her elbows lifted. She was not looking at me. She said, very slowly, "It was—just a guess. Just a hypothetical something that could happen."

Her voice was odd, though.

"I haven't seen them for a long time," I told her. "I thought there might be something."

Joyce said, "I'd hardly know if there were. I just work for Bruce Winslow. I don't know them well—either of them."

But there was still that tip from Roger about the leak from Bruce's office. I was on dangerously thin ice, but I had to push out a little farther. I said, "You're in Bruce's section. How is he doing? How is his work going?"

Joyce said tautly, "If it would get up your hopes to hear that he's doing badly—I'm sorry. So far as I know, everything is fine."

I didn't dare go farther than that. She got up abruptly. I hoped she wasn't angry, in spite of the closed, remote look on her face. She said, "I'm off now. There's more coffee if you want it. And—thanks again for a delightful evening."

I hated to see her go. I said, "May I see you again?"

She paused at the door, looking at me, still in that distant, gone-away fashion.

Then she asked, "Would it be to see me—or to hear about the Winslows?"

And then she was gone. . . .

I had lunch with Bruce Winslow. At first, when I called him, he said he was too tied up, but I kidded him acidly about getting to be the self-important bureaucrat, and he finally said reluctantly that he could squeeze out half an hour. As a social occasion it was nothing to cable home about. Most of us have a couple of fairly distinct aspects to our personalities that always seem to be poorly matched in one individual. With Bruce, one of those warring sides had always been a natural if somewhat shy quality of friendly sympathy. The jarring aspect in him had been a tendency to get stiff and all-too-well-bred when he was bored or irritated or angry. He was being very well-bred at lunch that day. It didn't help my state of mind any. I couldn't help suspecting that he probably thought it was a bit crude of me, all things considered, to be shoving myself at him and Candace like that.

If that was what he was secretly thinking, I was just as secretly agreeing with him. And right at the beginning, I just missed making a frightful boner. Over the hors d'oeuvres, he said a little stiffly, "Thanks for taking care of Candace last night."

I didn't think having one cocktail with her added up to much caretaking, and I was just about to say so when Bruce went on:

"She quite liked that little place you took her to. In the Quai Malaquais, wasn't it?"

By the grace of heaven, my mouth was full of goose-liver, and I had time to think, and to say the right thing. I said, "A place called Fournier's. Very simple—but the food is first class."

He said abstractedly, "Show it to me some time. I don't get around much these days."

And then he began to talk about a gaggle of visiting Congressmen from back home who had descended on his neck with intent to prove his office was squandering the people's tax money.

I drew a long breath of relief. It had been awfully close. I didn't in the least know what was going on; or at least I didn't know why it was going on. But I was getting little new pieces of the "what" part of it all the time. Quite obviously, Candace had miscalculated the night before, and Bruce had arrived home before she did. She must have been badly rattled to have told him such a risky lie about being out with me—but of course she'd thought she could call me first thing in the morning and square it with me before I saw Bruce. And I hadn't been back to my hotel yet to receive her call. I imagined she must be having a pretty poor time of it right then.

Over the dessert, Bruce made one more effort to sound genuine and friendly. He said, "I'm awfully glad you're over for a bit, Martin. Candace hasn't been having much fun. I'm glad you can take her around a little."

He wanted to sound sincere, I thought, but he wasn't quite making the grade. The last feeling in the world he was having right then was pleasure at my presence. It could have been a natural feeling that I was an old chapter in Candace's life he'd just as soon had stayed closed. But I couldn't help feeling there was more than that. In the old days, his good manners, his impeccable self-control, would have kept such a feel-

Patmos said, "See the position you have put me in?"

ing invisible even if he'd had it. Bruce Winslow had always been an impressive person. Even in college, before he'd started to go places in his career, he'd had an air that made people watch him in a group, and listen to what he had to say. He seemed different now: Tired, drawn very tight inside. Maybe it was just overwork, or maybe—

I couldn't figure any part of what was going on. I had no more doubt at all that the man Adolph Schreiber, or Ardel Patmos, or whatever he was calling himself now, was in contact with Bruce, or Candace, or both of them. It all seemed insane, but I recalled some other trusted public servants—in America, in France, in Britain—where such suspicions had seemed just as crazy, and I knew I didn't dare take anything for granted at all.

I made some polite response to Bruce's remark about squiring Candace, and it seemed to cover the subject to his satisfaction. I had the feeling more strongly than ever that he was just going through the social motions, that in a sense he hardly knew I was there at all. Over the coffee, I told him that I'd met some of his office force the night before. I was startled at the reaction it got. He looked at me, and there was no doubt he was seeing me now.

"Who?" he said sharply. "And where?"

"Up on Montparnasse, when I was pub-crawling after I left Candace." That was chronologically true, at least. I didn't have to say how long after. "One of them was a girl I knew in New York, named Joyce Shane."

He seemed to relax somewhat at that.

"Oh, yes," he said. "Nice girl. Very competent, too. Who else?"

"An interpreter named Jordan. A very callow young squirt, if you ask me. And your records chief, Russell—Arthur Russell."

"Jordan's worthless—he's due to be fired any day. Russell is—" He stopped, frowning. He seemed to be trying to make up his mind just how much he ought to try to find out about that meeting. "Did Russell shoot his mouth off much? He has a weakness that way."

"He did, somewhat. He was pretty drunk."

Bruce looked very displeased. "He's a problem. He's good at his job, but he's—he has Red mania. It's an obsession with him. He sees Communists hiding behind filing cabinets, in the wastepaper-baskets—everywhere he looks." Bruce hesitated again. It seemed to me that he was going to a lot of trouble to make sure I didn't take Arthur Russell seriously. "Don't pay much attention to him, Martin."

"Not much danger," I said. "We parted on very poor terms indeed. I doubt if I'll be seeing him again."

Bruce was still frowning. There was no doubt that the reference to Russell had upset him. Then, abruptly, he said that he was overdue and had to go.

I went straight to the Hotel Henri de Valois. I didn't meet any strangers in the hall outside Candace's suite this time. And when I knocked, the door opened in a matter of seconds. Candace said, "*Martin*—where have you *been*? I've been calling and calling—"

She looked frightened to death, but incredibly handsome.

I told her: "I've just been having lunch with Bruce."

She took a step back, and her face was dead white. I said, "Take it easy, Candace. You're luckier than you really deserve to be. Just by accident, I picked up the right cue in time. So remember—you and I had supper last night at a quaint little restaurant called Fournier's. After you got over that headache, that is. . . . How is the headache, by the way?"

She wasn't listening. She sank down on a chair and put her face in her hands for a minute. She was trembling with shock and relief. She said, "I thought it would be all right. I thought I could just call your hotel this morning and—"

"I know," I said. "The rub was that I was out on the town too. There's one slight difference, though, between you and me. I'm single."

I wanted to give her a lot of rope. I wanted to see what part she would play if she had her choice of all the rôles. She dropped her hands from her face and looked at me. Her eyes were wide and dark. She said, "I—I know this looks pretty bad, Martin. I— Please don't think—what you're thinking. I'll explain sometime."

I said, "Why not right now?"

I knew she was playing a game with me, but one thing now made it different from ever before. Now I was playing with her too. She sat looking down at her hands. She said, "All right, I'll tell you. I *didn't* have a headache when I sent you away last night; I had a date. But I don't care what you think, Martin—it's perfectly all right—perfectly harmless. Oh, I know Bruce would tear the place apart if he found out, but he'd be wrong—there's nothing like that—"

I said, "What *is* it like?"

She said, suddenly angry, "Damn it, Martin, you were here last night when Bruce called! It's like that night after night. It's like that all the time.

I rot here alone of boredom while he works and works."

She was doing a good job; she was even convincing herself.

"I know," I said. "Tough. So you had a date."

"We just went dancing," she said. "What's so terrible about that? And he's a perfectly nice boy. He's from Minnesota—a paratroop captain, awfully young and—and lots of fun. I know you won't believe this—but last night was the last time. He's leaving for his division in Germany. So it's all over. And there never was anything anyhow."

Her voice broke a little as she said that. Very effectively. She was doing a beautiful piece of work, and except for one small item, I might really have believed her. That man in the cab with her by the Rotonde might have been many things in his day, but a handsome young paratroop captain from Minnesota had never been one of them. And whatever Candace's own reasons were for being there, they had nothing to do with a wistful, tender little good-by-forever romance.

For a long, dangerous moment I balanced on a knife-edge of decision. Whether to crash down on her right then, trusting to shock-effect to get the truth out of her: The truth as to who her companion had been, why she'd been with him, what she was hiding. It might have worked, but the risk seemed very great. I tipped toward doing it, then pulled myself back. It was too soon, I didn't know enough yet, and above all I couldn't possibly give her any hint yet of what I was really after, or what my authority was. It was much too early for that. Or much too late.

Candace rose and stood looking at me. Her eyes were shadowy now with an emotion I couldn't read at first, but when I did I was stunned by the sheer magnificence of her powers of self-convincing make-believe. She was looking at me with compassion, with pity, for me—for what must be my helpless jealousy of the handsome young paratrooper. She said gently, "I'm an awful heel, Martin. I—it never occurred to me. This is pretty rough on you. I'm sorry, darling."

I was too stunned for a moment to answer. I guess the look on my face could as well have been taken for the misery of envious, frustrated love as for anything else. Candace put her hands to my cheeks and kissed me lightly on the lips. She said, "I'm sorry—please forgive me."

It was a long, long time since I'd been kissed by Candace. It took all the self-control I could dredge up, for a moment, to keep from sweeping her into my arms and making good all that lost time. Then I said, "The hell with it, Candace; there's nothing to forgive. But please—don't ever ask me to cover for you to Bruce again."

She laughed, a completely gay, relieved and charming laugh. She said, "Never again! There never will be another time. Once was enough."

She felt safe again now. The curtain was down, the lines were all said, the audience had loved her in the part. Then, abruptly, it was all lost. The phone rang—a wholly ordinary, everyday sound, but at the sudden harsh jangle, the relief and gayety went out of Candace as though some brutal unseen hand had slammed an iron shutter down across her eyes. Without a word she turned and crossed the room to answer the call.

I picked up a magazine from the table by my hand and leafed over the pages. I didn't want to seem to be listening, but my eardrums were aching with the effort to pick up the muted words Candace was murmuring into the phone. She spoke very low; I could only get a phrase here and there.

One time she said, "No—no, I haven't got it. I can't—it's quite impossible." Then, after a pause, "No. Really, no. It's no use—no use at all—"

I sensed she was looking toward me; watching to see if I heard, and I spun the pages and turned away. I couldn't hear any of the rest of it. But there was a prickly, tense feeling at the back of my neck. That look on Candace's face when the phone rang: stark, trapped, terrified! I hadn't the faintest idea what her fear was, but there was some kind of climax in the making, and shaping very fast. I could only watch now, and wait.

There was a click as Candace put the phone down. She came slowly back to me. Even complete terror couldn't hide the beauty of her face, but it made it a tortured, wrenched, Gothic beauty that it hurt me to see. White-lipped, she said, "That was Bruce."

I knew it hadn't been Bruce. There was no proof for the knowledge, but it was absolute just the same. It was still my part to wait and see.

Candace stood staring at me, her eyes dark, fathomless. She seemed to be measuring me, weighing me, counting her chances as a man dying of thirst in the desert would measure the few drying drops of water in the bottom of his cup. She said, "Martin, you said you'd help me if I needed you. You did say that, didn't you?"

I said, "Yes, I said it."

She took a long, uncertain breath. "Well, this is the time. And I have to ask without telling you why. Just completely on trust."

I said, "I'm still listening."

She moved toward me half a step, and then stopped. She said, "Will you take me away from here? Right now? Will you take me somewhere that we can—cannot be found—for a few days? Will you, Martin? Will you please do that for me?"

I had to think awfully fast, and there was no room for error. Maybe she really did have to get away. Maybe this was still just part of the act. Perhaps she just wanted to get *me* away. There was always that chance I had to be prepared for—that chance that I'd somehow been clumsy and had given myself away. Maybe that really had been Bruce on the phone. I remembered his face when I'd mentioned meeting Russell—startled, on guard, somehow at bay. There were too many ways this could go. I had to go along, very carefully now, and see. But stall too. Drag it out. Watch and see.

"Can you, Martin?" Candace insisted. "Don't you know *somewhere* we could go?"

There were a lot of places. I knew I wasn't going to any of them with her, but for a while at least I could pretend, improvise, experiment. I said dryly, "Won't Bruce look just a bit askance on our running off together?"

Candace said desperately, "I can't help about Bruce. I mean—I'll leave a note saying that I'm fed up—that I had to get away for a while. He knows I have been. He won't know I'm with you."

I said, even more dryly, "He just might notice a certain coincidence of disappearance."

"I can't help that. He knows how miserable I've been—" She stopped suddenly, searching my face. She said, "Martin, *you* don't think that I'm—that I'm making you a proposition, do you?"

I said, "I'm having just a little trouble on that point. Why must I go with you?"

"Don't you see?" She made a quick, almost despairing gesture. "I've got to—to stay out of sight for a while. I don't speak French—I don't know where to go. I need someone who does; there isn't anyone but you."

Protection was what she wanted, I thought suddenly. A place to hide, and someone to guard her there. But why, and against what, I still had to find out.

"Who are you afraid of, Candace?" I said. "If I'm going to do this for you, you'll have to tell me that."

She looked down at her laced fingers. Very low, she said: "It's Bruce; I'm afraid of Bruce. I—I haven't wanted to tell you—but we're about to break up; he's been very—violent."

And that, I thought, was the biggest lie of all!

My mind was made up. I couldn't possibly leave Paris with her. Not even to save her life, if that was what was at stake. I had to stay, to keep contact with Bruce Winslow, with Roger Payot, with the shadowy Mr. Schreiber-Patmos of the dark suits and the crooked-up elbow. But I was sure of one thing: Candace was really in flight. If I didn't do as she wanted, I'd lose contact with her, and I couldn't afford that. Whatever it was she was putting in my hands, it was too crucial to let go now.

I said, "I can't leave Paris now, Candace. But I can find a place to hide you here. Will that do?"

She said swiftly, "Yes. All right, Martin. Anywhere. If you're sure."

"I'm sure," I said. "It'll be all right. I'll have to leave you for half an hour."

That terrified her again. "No, please, Martin! Take me with you!"

"Lock your door," I said. "Don't open to anyone but me. I'll be back very soon."

I DIDN'T know how big a chance I was taking in leaving her like that. I didn't know if the whole fabric of fear and flight she had built up was genuine, or was some kind of half-hysterical filigree of pretense behind which she was moving in directions unseen by me and for purposes I still could not fathom. But for a while at least, wherever she was going, I was going to go with her.

I went back to my own hotel. For one thing, I seemed to be getting to the point where it was foolish to go on barehanded, and up till then my emergency automatic had been resting quietly in the bottom of my suitcase. I shoulder-holstered it inside my coat. Then I phoned Roger Payot. I told him I had to find a very secure place, but still inside Paris. He said he could do it, but it would take a little time to make arrangements. I told him I'd stay where I was till he called back.

I didn't do much thinking while I waited. There's a certain point in an operation where speculation is just beside the point. Things are happening; you don't know why, you just know they're going to go on happening. I felt as if I'd charged the net in a tense tennis match, and there was nothing to do but hang on there and go on parrying the drives as they came lancing at me, with no time to figure angles, or do anything at all but twist and block desperately to meet each new thrust.

My phone rang. It wasn't Roger, it was Joyce Shane. I hadn't expected her to call me again, and it gave me a very odd feeling to hear her voice. A feeling of tenderness, and regret—a wish to see her, and a wish she hadn't called.

Joyce seemed oddly off balance too. She said, "Martin, I've just thought—tomorrow's Saturday, you know."

I'd lost track myself, and I didn't think the fact had any deep significance anyhow. But Joyce changed that for me. She said, "There's a very nice French couple who work with me. They're going to make a week-end of it to Senlis. I've never been there and they asked me if I wouldn't like to go too. They suggested— If there was anyone else I'd like to ask, we could make it a foursome. Would you like to go, Martin?"

There wasn't anything in the world I'd rather have done—but nothing in the world that was more impossible. I tried desperately to find some formula that would make my refusal sound right to Joyce. I could guess what it must be costing her to make this gesture. And the great value of what she was, with so much delicacy and diffidence, making possible: A chance to start all over again—gently, quietly, with simple, unhurried companionship, till we could really find out.

I had to say, "I'm sorry. I can't tell you how sorry I am. I'd love to go to Senlis with you and your friends, but I just can't, Joyce. Not this week-end." And no chance to tell her why.

She was silent a moment, and when she spoke, her voice was cool, distant, detached. She said, "I'm sorry too, Martin."

I said, "Please ask me again, Joyce. Next week-end, maybe?"

"Perhaps," she said. "If you're still here, perhaps. . . ."

But her voice was a closed wall, a bricked-up gate that led somewhere once but never would again. I couldn't think of anything I might have done to make it different.

The phone rang the instant I put it down. Roger said crisply, "It's all arranged, Martin. You and your companion will take a cab and go to the Gare du Nord. Go in and come out on the west side. There's a cab-stand there for a single cab. It will be a green Renault with black fenders and the driver wears a trench coat and a brown cap. He's completely trustworthy and he'll know how to shake off anyone who might be following you. He'll take you to a place in Neuilly. You'll have complete security there."

It sounded very neat and business-like and foolproof. I couldn't see any reason why it wouldn't work. And if I could get Candace there, if I could make her feel secure and guarded, maybe she would talk to me freely. Somebody had to talk soon, I knew. The time I dared let things go on like this was narrowing now to a matter of hours.

I went back to Candace's hotel. She had a bag packed, but I wouldn't let her take it. It would have been foolish to go out so marked for departure. I told her I could get her some things later, and she didn't argue. She was terribly anxious to get away.

There was only one cab in the street when we went out, parked at the curb near the hotel entrance. I waved it on, and handed Candace in. I said "Gare du Nord," and the driver nodded and we pulled away.

Candace sat back against the seat and drew a long breath. She looked a little less frightened now, and there was some color in her face. I said, "When are you going to tell me what this is all about?"

She shook her head. "Not yet, Martin. When we get there, maybe. But not yet. You're being very good to me, Martin. I'll never forget it."

She put her hand lightly on mine as she spoke. It was a very faint pressure, and although she kept her hand there, the weight of it, the sense of contact, of communion, seemed strangely to grow less and less, lighter and lighter, till there was no feeling, no contact any more at all. It was a curious way to learn that it was finished, that finally I was no longer in love with her—even though, having loved her so much for so long, I would want to help and protect her if I possibly could. But I was free now, and I realized there is no freedom so bitter as that which comes too late.

I sat looking at the streets sliding by. It was late afternoon now, and the day had turned very dark, one of those gray days that come down on Paris in the summer sometimes, with a dark mist and low-sweeping clouds. The streets were full of people going home from work. Ordinary people, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers. And I thought, their safety counts too. They've lived so bravely and so long in the shadow of chaos. And I knew that somehow a long finger of that shadow was riding quietly with us there in the cab.

THEN we were off the boulevard, snaking through side-streets. I tapped on the window. "Gare du Nord," I said to the driver. "Didn't you hear me?"

He didn't turn his head. "Short cut," he said. "I know the way, monsieur."

I thought he was just running up the fare, but there was no use arguing about it. He turned abruptly from a narrow, almost deserted street into a tight dark alley. And

stopped. I said, "Damn it, what are you—"

I was too late. I saw Candace's face pale in the dusk, staring past me. The door of the cab was already open, and there was a man standing there in the gloom, a foot from my shoulder. Candace said softly, "My God—oh, my God—"

A quiet voice beside me said, "Be very careful, both of you. I won't hesitate to kill you if I must."

I sat still. There was nothing else to do. The man by the cab said, "Get out, very slowly. Keep your hands in front of you, Mr. Reece. I expect you to be armed."

I got out. The man said, "You too, Mrs. Winslow. Mr. Reece will die instantly if you make an outcry or a false move."

CANDACE got out. She looked as though she were sleep-walking. I could feel the hard muzzle of the pistol against my spine. I calculated the chances of spinning away from the gun and throwing a judo hold on the hand that held it—calculated and gave it up. I was too jammed against the side of the cab for free movement. The man behind me was no amateur. The man said something to the cab driver in a language I didn't understand. I thought it might have been Greek—or maybe Bulgar. The driver leaned over, flipped my coat back, and dropped my automatic beside him in the cab. The man behind me spoke again, and the driver backed out of the alley. I heard the grinding of his tires on the pavement, and then he was gone.

"Straight ahead," the man behind me said. "Then the door at the left. Please move very carefully."

The door led straight into a large, pavement-level room. For the slum it was in, the room was very comfortably furnished, with a studio bed and deep chairs. There were no windows, only a grimy skylight overhead.

"Sit down," the man said. "The yellow chair, Mrs. Winslow. The other one, please, Mr. Reece. And keep your arms hanging down over the side—so; that's right."

It was a very low chair, and the position I was in put me hopelessly off balance. But I could see the man with the gun now. He was the man of the hotel corridor—the man of the dark suit, the crooked-up elbow, the pale, thin-nosed face—the man called Adolph Schreiber, and Ardel Patmos, and various other names. Right now he was a man with a very steadily held gun. He said, "I think you know me, Mr. Reece?"

Bad as things were, I didn't see any point in giving the show away yet. "No," I said. "I don't know you."

"You're lying, of course. I know who you are." To Candace he said, "I warned you, Mrs. Winslow. I told you not to try to get away until our business was concluded. And I told you most specifically not to turn to any police or Intelligence agency for help."

Candace said desperately, "But he's not—it's just an accident that he—"

"Please don't drag out the farce, Mrs. Winslow. You were warned—and ignored the warning. I think you know quite well that Mr. Reece is a secret agent of the American Intelligence."

Candace said passionately, "He's not—he's really not—"

Then she stopped suddenly, staring at me, her eyes enormous with the question. I didn't know if Patmos really knew what I was. Maybe he was just guessing, using the sixth sense of an old pro to spot an opposite number anywhere in any crowd. It didn't matter now, anyhow. In that spot, the difference between a right guess and the admitted truth was no difference at all.

Patmos said, "Did you get the money for me, Mrs. Winslow? An idle question, really. You wouldn't be running if you had."

"No," Candace said. "I told you I couldn't. Ten thousand dollars was—perfectly hopeless." She said suddenly, fiercely, "Even if I could have, I don't think I'd have given it to you!"

Patmos said, "That's too bad—too bad for you. Even more so for your husband. The people I work for will be very pleased to have so trusted an official as Bruce Winslow branded as a traitor. It will be most valuable to them. They'll pay well. I need something to compensate for the money you so foolishly failed to get."

It was a nightmare conversation, a dialogue in hell. I said, "Candace—what is this? Where did you meet this man, anyhow?"

She turned her face away. She said brokenly, "Martin—I'm so terribly sorry that I got you into this."

"Go on and tell him," Patmos said mildly. "We have time. We must wait for dark anyhow."

I didn't think the dark would do Candace and me any good. He just wanted to be sure of a clean escape. I had no expectation of leaving that room with no holes in me. But I still wanted to find out. Candace said, "Martin—I never told you that I was married when I first knew you. I didn't want you to know—or anyone. It was a very rotten marriage. Then I got a divorce. The divorce wasn't good, Martin. I found out after I'd married Bruce that it was technically bigamy. I didn't want Bruce to know; I was afraid it would hurt him too much. I thought I could get it straightened out somehow without telling him. While we were in Washington," she looked at Patmos with pure hate, "this man came to see me, twice. He knew; he threatened to tell Bruce."

So far, the report from our Intelligence held out. Patmos had gone to the Winslow home. But how much farther? Had it only been to see Candace? Patmos was watching Candace impassively. She drew a long breath and went on:

"I knew it would be hard on Bruce—but I knew better than to submit to blackmail on such a thing. I told him I didn't care if he told Bruce or not."

"That was right," I said.

"No," Patmos said. "It was wrong. The first of several wrong moves."

Candace said, "When we were sent here to Paris, I thought I was free of him. But he got here somehow. He—he had something much worse to threaten me with then, Martin. He told me there were documents—very confidential information—going straight from Bruce's desk to a Communist spy ring. He *had* those papers, Martin; I saw them—with Bruce's signature; some of them were entirely in his handwriting. It was— I didn't know what to think—or do. There've been so many terrible cases; everyone is so fanatic and fearful of treachery now. I didn't doubt Bruce for a moment, but I was afraid."

SHE had reason to be afraid. I looked at Patmos. It was beginning to come clear now. Roger had said the man was a professional—for sale to the highest bidder. The Commies were holding his contract now, but Patmos had seen a wonderful chance to clean up something a lot bigger than whatever his Red bosses were paying him: A husband's reputation, his whole life and future, to sell back to a terrified wife. One ominous question remained unanswered. This play against Candace was just a profit-making side issue with Patmos. The major operation had been and still was getting the information from Bruce's office to the Red underground. Who had been getting that information out?

Candace said tiredly, "I know I've done this all wrong, Martin. But he—he frightened me so. He made me believe he really could ruin Bruce, no matter what I did. I thought if I could just get away from him for a while—get a little time to think—"

"But that was a mistake," Patmos said softly. "Now see the position you have put me in. You know who I work for—now Mr. Reece knows it

too. It would be very bad for me if anyone else should find out. What shall I do with you?"

I knew quite well what he intended to do. For what it was worth, I had one more question myself. "Who was getting you that information?"

Patmos shook his head. "Not even as a parting gift would I tell you that, Mr. Reece." He glanced at Candace. "Anyhow, Mrs. Winslow has suffered enough."

Candace said violently, "That's a lie! A horrible lie! Bruce would never have done it—never—never—"

Her voice rose and cracked. Patmos' face was suddenly hard and ugly. He turned his head slightly toward the door, listening. "Quiet!" he said harshly. "Be completely quiet!"

There was a quick violent hammering at the door. Outside, a man's voice was shouting something in a kind of drunken hysteria. Patmos hesitated for an instant. I didn't recognize the voice outside the door, but evidently Patmos did.

"Sit quite still," he said. "There is a difficulty here."

He had to open the door; the man outside would rouse the whole neighborhood if he didn't. Patmos slipped back the latch, never taking his eyes off me. As the door swung open he sidestepped so that he could have shot either way in the fraction of a second.

ARTHUR RUSSELL, Bruce Winslow's records-chief, stood swaying in the door. He was very drunk, even drunker than he had been at the Rotonde, and frantic with a rage that went beyond all sanity. His bulging eyes were fixed on Patmos—I doubt if he even saw Candace and me at all.

Patmos kicked the door shut. The pistol was swinging in a slow, careful arc from Russell to me. "You fool!" Patmos said. "You hopeless fool! I told you never to come here unless you were sent for!"

Russell swayed drunkenly. His hands opened and closed spasmodically, and his eyes were on Patmos' face, not on the gun. He said thickly, "You lousy Red! You damned, stinking, dirty Red—"

"So you found out," Patmos said softly. "That's too bad."

His face was completely closed now—a killer's face, waiting only for the right moment to strike.

Russell said hoarsely, " 'A business deal! Just get a little information to the right parties, and we'd all stand to clean up a nice little profit!' But I found out who the right parties really are! Now I'm going to—"

He started forward. I could see the pistol stop swinging, come to deadly rest. In that split, suspended moment, watching Arthur Russell move forward to his death, I had time for one queer flashing thought: That every man has his own odd, private morality; that Arthur Russell's was surely—now fatally—one of the oddest of all. To sell the trust placed in him for profit, for money, was a thing he could do. To sell it for treason was a thing he couldn't do, and now knowing it done beyond recall, he would die for it. . . . He moved forward—and he died.

There was only a second there for me. I moved as Patmos' finger squeezed down on the trigger. The two shots he fired into Arthur Russell's body came almost as one explosion. He knew I'd be coming in on him. As I lunged, he swung toward me, squeezing already for the next shot. But Russell's body, falling, struck against his arm and the third shot went wild.

I hit him with my shoulder under his arm, driving up from below, getting leverage to knock him up and off his feet. He staggered, tripped over Russell's sprawled legs and plunged face-forward toward the floor. I was right on top of him, driving hard, clutching for his gun hand—and missing. He hit the floor heavily. The pistol went off under him. The sheer agony of the bullet tearing into him must have contracted his fingers for still one more shot. His body heaved up under me in a terrible spasm. Then he went very still.

Outside in the alley I could hear a man's startled voice shouting an echo to the tattoo of firing. And a woman screaming for someone to bring the police. That was just fine with me. There was nothing I was more anxious to see than a cop—hundreds and hundreds of cops!

I FINISHED writing my report in Roger Payot's office. It was for Ross Corliss, but everyone could get in on the act now without damage. Bruce Winslow had been and gone, the chief of our Paris-based Intelligence—the whole thing was going into the record, neat and tidy and ironed out. Candace was in a hospital, under treatment for shock; Bruce was on his way to her. They'd be all right now.

Roger said, "You're exhausted, Martin. Go get some rest."

"It's all right. It's good to be done with it. It's good we won out."

"One more small victory," Roger agreed. "They all count, even the skirmishes. Even with the big struggle always ahead."

I said, "If we keep winning, maybe we can keep it always ahead."

"God willing," Roger said. "Go on now and sleep."

It wasn't time for sleep yet. The concierge at Joyce Shane's apartment-house gave me a broad smile as she recognized the high celebrant she had helped get to bed the night before. She said, "It's very late, monsieur—but I think mademoiselle is home. Ring and go up."

I went up the stairs and knocked on Joyce's door. I think that at first she must have thought I was winding up another big night on the town. I know there was a long red welt on my face from the fight with Patmos, and my clothes were no fashion plate. Joyce was wearing a tawny dressing-gown that fell sheerly to her feet, and her hair was down, and she looked unbelievably beautiful to me. She stood staring at me, at what must have been a completely transparent look of love and hope in my face.

I said, "Senlis is a nice town, darling. But Foix is far, far nicer. . . ."

I took her in my arms and kissed her. Against my lips she said, "Is it all right, darling? Is it really all right?"

"You'll see," I said. "You'll see in Foix. You'll see how all right it is. Always and always."

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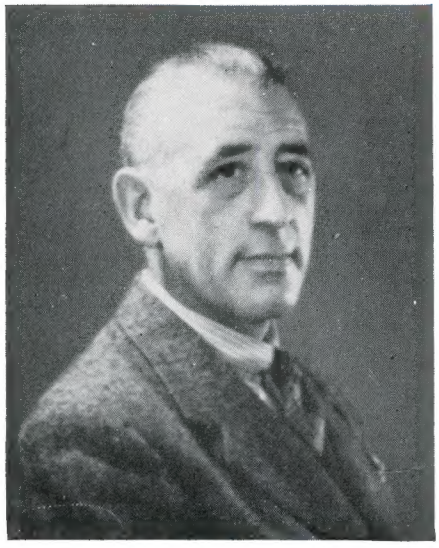
Who's Who *in this* Issue



Eric Frank Russell

PERSONAL details about writers who appear in good magazines frankly bore me beyond description, but if *Blue Book* readers can stand it, here goes: Age forty-six, look like fifty-six, feel like thirty-six, act like twenty-six, think like six. Altitude 6 ft. 2 in., weight 180 lbs. Educated by the late Robert Ingersoll and the late Charles Fort. These gents boiled away all the abstruse ignorance squirted into me by the British educational system.

General Patton invaded Europe with me hiding close behind his pants. I've heard tell that a couple of other guys named Eisenhower and Bradley were also there, though I never saw hair or hide of them.

Chief hobbies: needling my agent, arguing with a tame garden toad who keeps saying, "Oink!" and lying on a rug doing nothing. Chief ambition: to become a social parasite. Superior ambition: to entertain so many magazine readers so well that someone will have a momentary regret when I'm put down the hole. Inferior ambition, positively unattainable: to type with more than two fingers.

I have gray-black hair, greenish eyes, wear size 16 collars, can't live without at least two hundred cigarettes in the desk, and always am conducting about twenty simultaneous love affairs with animals at the local zoo, especially the cuddlesome ones such as lemurs and bush babies. The zoo authorities have me constantly shadowed as the only way of keeping their stock. (Last time they had to pry me loose from a sulphur-crested cockatoo from whom I was learning some sulphur-crested words.)

I think that's all anyone could possibly care about. Oh, yes—I fiddle around trying to write stories.

Philip Clark

BORN New Brunswick, N. J., 1907. Brief and inglorious career as world's most unpublished foreign correspondent in Near East, 1927. Studied Sorbonne, Paris, 1929-30. Writing magazine fiction past 17 years. Stories published in *Adventure, Collier's, Saturday Evening Post, Liberty, American, Redbook, Elks, American Legion,* etc. Lived in Charleston, S. C., 1936-1948, less three years U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps, two years service in European Theatre. Now domiciled in Swannanoa, N. C., with wife, young son and daughter. Favorite sports: Surf fishing, mountain hiking. Have hiked and camped in Maine, South Carolina, North Carolina, Spanish Pyrenees.

Frank Talbert

HE was born, July 27, 1912, in Amarillo, Texas. He is a fifth-generation Texan. Among his more cherished ancestors is a Galveston pirate (who later became a preacher) and an Alamo fighter. During the war he served with the Marines, and at present is working on a Texas history and writing for the Dallas Morning *News.*

WITH THE EIGHTH FIGHTER BOMBER WING—KOREA

"THAT was fun! Let's go back again!" was the enthusiastic comment of Artist Hamilton Greene (left), combat artist for BLUE BOOK MAGAZINE, when he returned from participating in an air strike which ended in an aërial dogfight with Communist MIGs. Greene rode as passenger in a two-seater jet T-33 aircraft piloted by Captain Robert M. Loeffler, Beverly Hills, Calif. (right), a veteran jet pilot with the 8th Fighter Bomber Wing, the pioneer jet combat group in the Korean War. (Official USAF Photo)

Good-by to a suicide mission: "Autobiography of a Kamikaze Pilot," page 88

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SECOND GENESIS *by Eric Frank Russell;*
HIS FATHERS' SON *by Owen Cameron;*
THE WOLF, SHE HOWL *by Neill Wilson;*
THE ARMY'S SPY HUNTERS *by Thomas M. Johnson;* BONEHEAD *by Joel Reeve*

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